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Some Foreign Elements in the Sudanese Religions

Abstract

In this study, we are concerned with the Nilotic tribes of the Shilluk, Nuer, Dinka, Nuba, Acholi, and with the southwestern group of the Azande and associated groups of the Sudan. The term Nilotic, as used by anthropologists, refers to certain groups in the Nile Valley, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanganyika who have closely related physical, linguistic and cultural characteristics, as well as traditions and myths suggesting a common origin.

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SOME FOREIGN ELEMENTS
IN THE SUDANESE RELIGIONS

by

James E. Kirkland

A Thesis

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for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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1957

A P P R O V A L

This dissertation, entitled
SOME FOREIGN ELEMENTS
IN THE SUDANESE RELIGIONS

by

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Candidate for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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SOME FOREIGN ELEMENTS IN THE SUDANESE RELIGIONS

INTRODUCTION

Lying between Egypt on the north and Uganda and the Belgian Congo on the south, with French Equatorial Africa on the west, the Red Sea, Eritrea and Ethiopia on the east, is the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Bilad as-Sudan (Country of the Blacks), comprising an area of about one million square miles. This area became independent on January 1, 1956 and is now called the Sudan. While no geographical configurations divide the area, the northern region is inhabited by tribes which are Muslim, and the southern region by tribes which are, for the most part, pagan. As there are ethnic and religious differences between the tribes of the northern and southern areas, so there are climatic differences between the areas. As a general statement, it may be said that the northern area is characterized by extreme dryness and a lack of rainfall, no rain at all north of the 20° latitude, while there is an abundance of rainfall in the southern portion. The aridity is such, in the north, that in some years there may be none or almost no rain. This practically rainless desert of the north, with little vegetation, is set over against the tropical region of the south with its long rainy season. Trimingham has pointed out that there are three seasons in the northern and central Sudan, saif (summer) from March to June or July, with its intense heat, days of hot parching desert winds, and especially dust storms (habub) making the sky reddish brown, withering

plants, and trying man and beast. June begins the rainy season (kharif). Winter (shita), which begins with the advent of the dry northerly winds in October, lasts until March. The southern section, or south of 12° latitude, is characterized by long and progressively heavy rainfall (Trimingham 1949: 3-4).

In this study, we are concerned with the Nilotic tribes of the Shilluk, Nuer, Dinka, Nuba, Acholi, and with the southwestern group of the Azande and associated groups of the Sudan. The term Nilotic, as used by anthropologists, refers to certain groups in the Nile Valley, Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika who have closely related physical, linguistic and cultural characteristics, as well as traditions and myths suggesting a common origin.

The Nilotes occupy the southern half of the Sudan, and can be found in the provinces of Darfur, Kordafan, White Nile, Fung, Upper Nile, Bahr el Ghazal, and Equatoria. Nilotic groups can also be found in the western borderland of Abyssinia, northern Uganda, eastern Kenya, Belgian Congo and Tanganyika. These Nilotic tribes are not in one single area. In the north are the Dinka, Nuer, Shilluk. To the south and southwest, separated from these, are the Pari, Buren-speaking people, Atwot, and scattered groups of Bahr el Ghazal. In the center, the Acholi, Lango, Alur and Jo-Paluo are separated from the northern group of Sudanic and Nilo-Hamitic peoples, and the most southernly Nilotic groups are separated from each other and from the central group by Nilo-Hamites and Bantu (Butt 1952: 1-2).

The Shilluk are situated on the west side of the White Nile from Lake No in the south to Kaka in the north, and on the east side of the White Nile from Kodok on the northern shore of River Sobat, an agricultural and sedentary group of about 100,000.

The Nuer are situated on a stretch of savannah territory on both sides of the Nile south of its junction with the Sobat and Bahr al-Ghazal rivers on both shores of these rivers having a population of about 260,000.

The Dinka occupy a large territory stretching from 12° to 6° north, from Renk in the north to Tombe in the south, widely extended to the west from Bahr al-Ghazal, to the most southern part of Kordofan Province just north of the Bahr al-Arab river. The Dinka population is about a half million.

The Nuba occupy a small part of the hills of southern Kordofan, bounded on the east by the Shilluk on the west side of the White Nile, and on the south by Bahr al-Ghazal and Lake No. Of these, Trimingham remarks, "At the bases of some southern hills (Elivi, Tolidi) are detribalized groups of Nuba calling themselves Arab with no claim to the title except that they have taken the name of the tribes (Hawazma and Kawahla) they once served as slaves" (Trimingham 1949: 246).

The Acholi occupy about a thousand square miles of territory of the Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda. We are concerned only with the group in the Opari district on the southern border of the

Southern Sudan. This is a hilly country, while the majority of the Acholi live in Uganda on the rolling plains, intersected by numerous water courses and swamps, typical of savannah areas, with small areas of forests and hills. We have no population figures of the Acholi.

The Azande of the Nilotic Sudan are found in the Nile-Congo watershed, 6° north to 4° south latitude, its most northerly point being less than 50 miles north of Tambura and its most southernly area not more than 25 miles south of Yambio. In the Sudan there is a population of about 200,000; in the Belgian Congo there is a population of about 400,000 and in French Equatorial Africa the population of Azande is 25,000 to 30,000. In the Sudan the group with which we are concerned lives in an area which extends over some 30,000 square miles, however, many square miles of it to the north and northwest are completely unoccupied.

Butt has given a summary of the general characteristics of the Nilotic types as follows:

- (a) They are very tall, averaging 5'10" or more. Many individuals are over 6'5", and this is particularly the case among the Nuer and Dinka. The Nilotes have been characterized as the tallest people in the world on average.
- (b) In figure, they are generally slight and lithe, with narrow hips, thin calves, and extraordinarily long legs. They have slender bones, and are not muscular.
- (c) Their hair is frizzy like that of the African Negro. They have little body hair, and their complexions are dark brown, verging on black, although there is considerable variation ranging from black and very dark brown to light bronze shades.

- (d) In features they have the broad nose, everted lips, and prognathous profile which approximates to the Negro type. Nevertheless, some individuals are met with aquiline noses, thin lips and long finely shaped faces. There is considerable variation between two extreme types.
- (e) The Nilotes are markedly dolichocephalic, and have an average cephalic index of approximately 72 (Butt 1952: 16-17).

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

In the 14th century, Islam penetrated into the eastern Sudan, where it came into contact with pagan elements. The kingdom of Maqurra, with its capital at Dongola, which was a nominal Christian kingdom for at least 700 years, had fallen to the Mamluk, who held sway in Egypt from 1250 to 1517. The southern kingdom of Nubia, known as Alwa, whose capital was Soba, did not fall until 1504. Conditions were such that nomadic tribes, without exercising too strong a hold upon Nubia, were fairly free to depart to districts where they were not subject to any alien rule, and in the event that an expedition was sent from Egypt, the tribes could easily find another place while the expedition was in progress, resuming their status quo as soon as the troops moved (MacMichael 1922: 188).

From the Senegal to the upper Nile valley, Islam has been spread in the west by the Almoravids. The princes of Ghana and their vassals, together with the king of Mali on the upper Niger, have been converted to Islam by their victors. Timbuktoo was the center of Islamic culture in the 13th century. It was in the 18th century that Islam gained new force, when the Takrur established

Withdrew

in Futa-Jallon in 1720 a new theocratic regime. The Takrur Uthman Danfojo converted Hausa and established the Sokoto state in 1802. Umar, tribal kinsman of Danfojo, joined the warriors' order Tijaniyah while on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and the grand master of the order assigned to him the Sudan. This order had great influence in north Africa. Islam was introduced in Kanem, the central Sudan (central Africa) along Lake Chad in the 11th century. In the eastern Sudan the Nubians, who formerly were Christians, were converted to Islam by way of Egypt. Suleyman^x was responsible for the entrance of Islam in Darfur in the 16th century, and one of his successors took Kordofan in the 18th century. However, Islam did not make any major advances until the Egyptian conquest in the 19th century (Brockelmann 1947: 408-409).

After the fall of the Nubian Christian Kingdom, Bedawin tribes moved south through Donqola, and farther south on the Nile and White Nile through the steppe area, then to Kordofan in the southwest and southeast up the Atbara and Blue Nile into Buntana and the Jezira. The Baqqara entered the Sudan by the Nile route and turned west from Donqola and then into what is today the French Sudan.

In the first quarter of the 19th century, Egypt^x invaded the Sudan at the command of Muhammad Ali Pasha, who sent his son Ismail and Muhammad Bey to invade the Sudan. This was for the purpose of getting slaves to enlarge his army and money to carry on his wars. Muhammad Bey^x went through the Baiyuda Desert to Kordofan, and Ismail took the eastern shore of the Nile to Sennar. When Muhammad Ali

moved

died in 1849, Egypt held sway as far south as Kodok, and on the east in the Beja lands to the Kasala and Tokar regions near the Abyssinian border. This period was marked by slave traffic, exploitation, heavy taxation, ruination of provinces, disintegration of pagan tribal units, and victimization. The slave trade, carried on with the blessing of Islam, had no regard for the indigenous groups upon which it was imposed.

The Mahdiyya period was begun and led on by Muhammad Ahmad, a Dongolani who was convinced that he was the Mahdi who was divinely called upon to initiate a new order of things. Influenced by dreams, visions and revelations, he drew many to him, binding them to God through himself, including certain Baqqara chiefs by a bai a or oath of allegiance to the Jihad, or holy war, against the infidel Turk. His revolt met with success, and the devotees of the Mahdi reconquered the Sudan. From 1883 until 1898 the Dervish Empire held sway, being defeated at the Battle of Omdurman (1898), when a Condominium was created between Great Britain and Egypt over the Sudan, thereafter known as the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (Trimingham 1949: 81-104).

Islam spread in the Sudan as elsewhere by intermarriage, conquest, trade and the slave traffic. A strong impetus was given to Islamic dissemination at the end of the 18th century by the emergence of the Puritanical Wahhabi movement in Arabia. This movement was initiated by a jurist of Najd, Muhammad ibn al-Wahhāb (1703-1791). Wahhabism spread by conquest over most of central

again
Arabia, taking over the cities of Mecca and Medina. While it was checked by Muhammad Ali and confined to Najd, its influence was so powerful that it reappeared in the middle of the 19th century and even in the beginning^x of the 20th century. In addition to the Wahhabi movement, other modern movements grew up in north Africa whose influence was felt in the Sudan.

The Dervish orders were established in the Sudan by missionaries from the Hijaz in which the holy cities of Mecca and Medina are situated. These missionaries exerted a strong influence on the Sudan; however, the influence of the slave trade and the army recruitment were more powerful in the spread of Islam for the reason that they broke up the centers of traditional life and caused the detribalized elements to be fused into Islam.

An interesting factor with reference to the spread of Islam is the little emphasis that is placed upon proselytization on a large scale basis. Proselytization went on, but in a quiet, imperceptible manner. This method, though quiet and unobtrusive, was effective in gaining ground because its adherents who travelled to foreign lands were by word and by deed confessors of their religion, acknowledged their faith daily in their prayers and in other religious observances, and these could not fail to make a deep impression on the African (Westermann 1949: 134-135).

It may be said that the genius of Islam is in its ability to accommodate itself to the indigenous elements upon which it seeks to impose itself, without misplacing those elements.

Trimingham calls this a process of disintegration, or re-integration, a "gradual disintegration" of the tribal culture on the one hand, and a "gradual transformation" of the whole society on the other hand, the new culture giving immediate values without displacing the old (Trimingham 1952: 271).

This is an important factor in the spread of Islam in the Sudan and, for that matter, in its spread in general. By making no demands on indigenous groups to give up their traditional religion, and by incorporating the religious elements it meets with, it projects itself easily into these groups, and by a slow, leavening process becomes a part of the warp and woof of the traditional religion which in turn is incorporated into Islam. It is a point of "becoming all things to all men" as this acculturative process is at work. In saying that Islam projects itself into the traditional religion of the Sudanese, this is *we do* not to imply that there is transference of Islamic culture to the Sudanese culture, but rather that the two cultures interact, resulting in a synthesis of the type called by Malinowski tertium quid (Malinowski 1945: 65). It is then, this accommodative and syncretistic aspect of Islam which has enabled it to assimilate foreign elements and thus to facilitate its own spread.

Another factor in the spread of Islam among indigenous Sudanese is the lack of racial discrimination in Islam. This means that Islam regards all "true believers" not only as religious brothers but as social brothers as well. Trimingham has

pointed out that where Islam comes into contact with Christian missions fostered by Europeans, Islam still spreads "because it offers more understandable religious, social and economic values than Western Christianity, which only allows its adherents religious and not social equality" (Trimingham 1949: 249).

Malinowski, in pointing out what Europeans have and have not given the Africans, said, "Yet it is just the spiritual gifts with which we are most generous, while we withhold wealth, power, independence and social equality. Even when it comes to spiritual gifts, we often hand out the shadow and not the substance" (Malinowski 1945: 57-58).

This non-recognition of racial discrimination by Islam gave impetus and facilitation to its spread. The African did not take long to realize that he was accepted as a brother in this new religious fellowship, with all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto. Islamic society gave the African a sense of belonging and as a believer or convert, his social status was elevated.

Westermann maintains that the representatives of Islam were people of a higher standard of life than the Negroes, and it became the ambition of the Negroes, primarily of the chiefs and the higher ^{upper} classes, to attain the socially higher status of the Muslim. As a result of this, there followed the adoption of the new religion, made easier by the fact that Islam adapted itself in large measure to indigenous customs and views, and that its moral demands were not exacting (Westermann 1949: 134).

While all these outside forces or influences taken into account by Trimingham, Westermann, Malinowski and others, are factors in the process of detribalization, it would seem that to account for detribalization only by influences from without is to assume a priori that all members of a tribe have a uniform thought pattern. It is quite probable that what has been in many cases overlooked is that there can be found in every culture intellectual and social deviators who give little more than token allegiance to the tenets of the tribe. These social and intellectual deviators are vital factors in the matter of detribalization from within, as well as other forces or factors from without. Because of deviators from within, changes can more easily take place along with influences from without. This must be taken into account in the spread of Islam. Because these natives were illiterate, one must not infer that there we^{re} no cultural and social deviators among them.

Probably no factor was more important in the spread of Islam in Africa than the fact that it was Africanized. Trimingham has noted that Islam is disseminated by people "who are or have become Africans" and are therefore not so distant or distinct as Europeans. He adds that "Islam has the overwhelming advantage of rarely finding itself in direct contact with pagans whose cultural level is so far below, or at any rate so different as to preclude a friendly understanding" (Trimingham 1952: 270).

This Africanization of Islam has given impetus to its spread in the Sudan. This is understandable, for African Islam turns out

to be to the African something that is not entirely new and therefore easily assimilable. It has already been stated that Islam accommodates itself to the indigenous elements of traditional religion with which it comes in contact. But it should also be added that this lower traditional religion also reacts upon this higher Islamic culture, and does so in such a way as to leave its mark upon it. One must not think of the traditional religion as (being) something (that is) dormant or inactive. It is in no way static, but in a very vital sense dynamic.

This Africanization process was heightened by what Trimingham termed the "cellular process" (Trimingham 1949: 101), by which he meant that there was no campaigning or proselytization, but the bearers of Islam were fekis, or malams, who came in and passed on their knowledge by teaching the natives and making of them fekis or malams; these in turn disseminated this truth (that had come to them) to others. *acquired*

Certainly foreign elements were adopted by the Sudanese, but as Westermann has suggested, "the foreign elements they adopted have been so completely absorbed and adapted that today they appear to be indigenous" (Westermann 1949: 131). The fact is, these bearers of Islam, by intermarriage with the natives, for all intents and purposes became Africans themselves and thus their pupils or disciples assisted in both the spreading of Islam and Africanizing Islam. In another connection, Greenberg has brought out that "amalgamation of Muhammadan and native belief did not take place in the main through intensive contact between peoples but came

about by a process in which the native learned class adapted what they found in the written and printed sources at their disposal to the native situation, and in the process retained much of pagan beliefs, fitting these beliefs into a Muslem framework" (Greenberg 1946: 10).

It has been stated that hostility is a deterrent to culture assimilation. However, hostility does not preclude assimilation. During the last decades of the Turkiyya period from 1820 to 1885, for instance, there were much hostility, corruption, and cruelty.

"Slave raiding became general in the southern Sudan and was carried out with the greatest cruelty. Thousands were killed during the actual raids, and so brutally were the survivors treated that many more died on the long journey to the northern slave market"

(Jackson 1954: 9). This brutality and hostility, however, did not hinder Islam from spreading among the very same people who were abused. Certainly under such circumstances Islam would not necessarily be appealing to those with whom it came in contact; nevertheless, it spread, slowly, painfully, sometimes almost imperceptibly, thus showing that not even hostility can completely impede the acculturative process between two cultures. Alexander Pope has said in his Essay on Man, "Vice is a monster of so frightful a mien as, to be hated, needs but to be seen, yet seen too oft, familiar with her face, we first endure, then pity, then embrace" (Harvard Classics 1910: 40, 431). So with culture, however hostile.

It ought to be indicated here that sedentary tribes have been, as a rule, more receptive to Islamization than nomadic tribes.

Nomadic tribes, even in Arabia proper, have become Islamized only superficially. Islam shows greater strength in the towns and villages of the settled population. It may well be called a city or town religion for nomadic Islamic culture, for the most part, lacks ritual prayer and fasting, the keeping of the sharī'a or canon law, and lacks also the customary segregation of women which obtains among settled Islamic groups. While it cannot be said that all of the duties of Islam are carried out strictly by settled groups, they do adhere more closely to the tenets and facets of Islamic practices than can be found among the nomadic elements. "From the beginning Islam has been based upon the city as is shown by the Qur'ānic legislation which is primarily urban. It is urban Islam which preserves and transmits Islam in its most distinctive sense. In Africa this transmission is through actual contact at the markets in the towns and by the wayside, through itinerant merchants and hedge priests, and through Qur'ān schools set up in villages" (Trimingham 1952: 270).

We are concerned in this study with investigating the influence of Islam upon the native Sudanese religions, with special reference to the southern Sudan. It is general knowledge that the northern Sudan is practically, if not wholly, Islamized. In the southern area this is not the case. While Islam, as we shall see, has had its impact upon these pagan tribes (the word pagan is used in a

general sense), it has not Islamized these tribes. The southern Sudan does not even speak the language of the north (Arabic), but has a number of its own dialects and in general, follows its own way of life.

In this study our method shall be to look into the "Native Religion", discussing in Chapter I, Religious Beliefs; Chapter II, Religious Practices; Chapter III, Religious Functionaries and Organized Ceremonials. In Chapter IV, we shall focus attention upon the Influence of Islam upon the "Native Religion", followed by a brief conclusion.

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CHAPTER I
NATIVE RELIGION
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

A. GENERAL CHARACTER

In a brief way we have pointed out the historical background of Islam with reference to the Sudan and have noted something of its spread and the acculturative process between Islam and the native traditional religion. We now come to the aspect of the native religion. Probably one of the most difficult terms to delimit is that of religion.

Tylor regards the "belief" in spiritual beings as "a minimum definition of Religion". This he calls "animism" (Tylor 1871: 424).

Frazer defines religion as "a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human life" (Frazer 1947: 50). Thus defined, religion consists of two elements, a theoretical and a practical, namely, a belief in powers higher than man and an attempt to propitiate or please them.

Marett thinks in terms of belief in impersonal spiritual power pervading all things as religion. This he calls "animatism" (Marett 1909: 15).

Schmidt says, "Religion, subjectively is the knowledge and consciousness of dependence upon one or more transcendental personal Powers to which man stands in a reciprocal relation.

Objectively, it is the sum of the outward actions in which it is expressed and made manifest, as prayer, sacrifice, sacraments, liturgy, ascetic practices, ethical prescriptions, and so on" (Schmidt 1931: 2).

Herskovits defines religion as "belief in and identification with a greater force or power" (Herskovits 1948: 377).

Because of the subjective elements in religion it becomes difficult for an observer to say what is religion and what is not. One wonders what an untutored African, acquainted only with his indigenous religion would think of our reverence in singing our National Anthem or paying allegiance to the flag.

Every thoughtful American, and others acquainted with our way of life, know that these acts are elements in patriotism and not religious acts. Or else what would he think of thousands standing on tiptoes hollering to the top of their voices while others throw up hats and take off coats and run around as a batter drives out a home run in our great American sport, baseball, or makes a touchdown in football? Could he not regard this as contemporary worship of the hero of the moment or of ancestral worship of the god or goddess of football or baseball? This question is only to suggest that many of our observations of native religion may not be entirely accurate.

In contrasting the place of religion between East and West, Patai has shown that in the West it has at best a rather delimited field of its own and is somewhat out of touch with the

focal economic and technological complexes of Western civilization. The role of religion on Eastern culture is profoundly different. Religion in the East has no field of its own because the whole of life is its domain and is permeated with it (Patai 1953: 39).

This means that religion is to be regarded as a focal element in Eastern culture and that it dominates every area of life in one way or another from the day of one's birth to the day of one's death.

Now as religion is the focal element in Eastern culture it may be said that ancestor worship is the focal element in African religion. Nothing so saturates or permeates the African mind as the matter of ancestor worship. These ancestors are regarded as intermediaries who stand ready at all times to assist the petitioners if they are pleased. Parrinder has used the triangle to describe this relationship between the spiritual powers and the worshipper: "At the apex is the sky, which symbolizes the Supreme Power from whom all life flows and to whom all returns. The base is the earth, sometimes personified as a goddess, but always important to man as the producer of his food and the burying-place of his dead. On the earth lives man, and his chiefs and kings are rungs in the ladder between himself and God. On one side of the triangle are the ancestors, rising up in the hierarchy by their increased powers. Dead kings and chiefs are their leaders and potent to help or harm. On the other side of the triangle are the gods, or natural forces, which must be propitiated

lest they become angry at neglect and cause the seasons to fail" (Parrinder 1954: 25).

In the conception of the African, it may be that he regards the Supreme Power as being at the top or apex of his spiritual triangle but in practice his ancestors are at the top for it is with these that he deals much more frequently than with God or the Supreme Power. God to him is a far off entity and only when he has exhausted all other means or help from intermediaries does it become necessary to call Him to his aid.

It seems that man is so constituted that he either finds a god or makes one. This applies to the African as well as to other groups of the human race. Up to this day we have no record of a tribe anywhere, however primitive, and the term is used in a general sense, without some kind of religion.

One would find it extremely difficult to give any specific pattern which would be indicative of the religious beliefs of all of the tribes of the southern Sudan. Religious beliefs differ between tribes and for that matter within the several tribes themselves there may be differences as to emphasis upon one religious aspect or another. But one can give an over all pattern of religious beliefs of the area taking into account that details may vary from one group or tribe to another. However, there are certain fundamental beliefs which would seem to characterize the region. Among these are the belief in

the existence of a Supreme Being, the belief in ancestral spirits, for ancestor worship may be regarded as the focal element in the religion of the Nilotic Sudanese, the belief in divine kings, a belief that the ancestral spirit is incarnated in a king from generation to generation--the Shilluk is a case in point, a belief in rain-makers and kujurs or priests, a belief in totemism. Among the Dinka, e. g., totemism is strongly developed and it is likewise found among many other tribes of the Nilotic area. The Shilluk are not totemistic but there are certain indications of the existence of totemism in the past and they avoid consanguineous marriage (Hamilton 1935: 223-224).

Among the Nilotes religious beliefs center upon a supreme God, as well as spirits, including ancestral spirits. The belief in juok, the high God, is practically ubiquitous among the Nilotes. Juok is the supreme creator who must be approached through Nyikang, the first king of the Shilluk, who is regarded as being incarnated in every Shilluk king. Juok is the omnipresent spirit of the dead among the Nuer, and the Dinka think of juok as the spirits of the dead. Many tribal groups regard the witch doctor as "the man of juok".

According to Hofmayr, Juok Ficere means whirlwind, Juok Nam means river-spirit, Juok Achwaci means creator, Jame Juok means things made by juok as food etc., Juok Tim means wood spirit, and Juok Ayim means protector. Whatever cannot be understood is juok. Juok is therefore a plurality, but he is also a single entity.

He may be either good or bad, or neither, or he may be all three.

He may bring sickness, may protect people or he may merely stand aloof from human affairs. Certain diseases are specifically associated with him. The cult of juok is not expressed in any external action or ritual and juok is invoked only when appeals to the ancestors and to Nyikang fail (Hofmayr 1925: 186-187, 193).

Rain-making and other ritual powers carried on for the well-being of the tribes hold a high place in the religious life of the southern Sudanese. The rain-maker holds the highest rank among the Dinka, while with the Nuer he may hold in himself a combination of a number of religious experts. This means the rain-maker may be a prophet, a leopard skin chief, a land chief, all in one.

The Nilotes live in the realm of the supernatural. Their whole life is permeated and pervaded by religious forces. Ceremonies, sacred places, and ritual experts give meaning and cohesion to the whole of life. Religious beliefs focus attention on their daily, basic needs. These ritual observances are regarded as very closely related to their whole social economy, their land, their cattle, rain, health. In a word, the African lives in a spiritual world where there is constantly going on an interplay of spiritual forces. Pervaded by this interplay of spiritual forces the African brings to his aid whatever he can derive from these vital forces.

One cannot give too much prominence to or place too much stress upon the matter of ancestor worship among the Nilotes.

It cannot be overemphasized in the religious behavior-pattern of the pagan Sudanese. Africans believe in ancestors and regard them, though dead, as ever living. In the concept of the Sudanese they are regarded as having additional powers at death, and thus they are constantly sought to obtain blessings and to avert dangers. For everything which concerns a family, its well-being, its productivity, both in field and in their huts is of interest to the ancestors. Ancestor worship is at the very core of Nilotic religion. This does not mean that their concept of the high God is absent from their religious tenets, but it does mean that for all intents and purposes he is so seldom appealed to, even in crises, that he is to them as if he were not. Only in the most extreme cases is he turned to. Ancestor worship then makes up the warp and woof of their religion. This is their religion, their way of life.

B. COSMOGONY AND COSMOLOGY

From time immemorial men have speculated as to the origin of the universe and of things. In their search for the origin of things, they have reached varying conclusions. This struggle of mankind in general to formulate ideas of the origin of the universe can be found in sacred and classic writings as well as in folklore of so-called primitive groups of the human race. The Shilluk concept of cosmogony can be found in their myths. Their idea of cosmogenesis is centered around Nyikang, their first king, and their high god, juok.

According to Shilluk traditions, in the beginning was juok, the Great Creator who created a great white cow which came up out of the Nile and was called Deung Adok. The white cow gave birth to a boy whose great-grandson was a man called Ukwa. One day Ukwa saw two beautiful sisters sitting by the Nile. Their long hair reached to the lower half of their bodies, which were like those of crocodiles. Ukwa was enchanted with them, but they refused all his advances. Ukwa went to the river day by day until he succeeded in catching them off their guard and seized them.

He married the two girls, of whom the elder, called Nikaiya, gave birth to a son, Nyikang, who was part man and part crocodile. On account of a dispute with his relatives, Nyikang decided to leave the place where he was living. He grew wings and flew south of the Sobat River, where from crocodiles, hippopotami, wild beasts and cattle he created men and women to people the land. Nikaiya is said to be immortal, and sometimes to appear to the Shilluk in the form of a crocodile (Jackson 1954: 172).

The Shilluk divide the universe into three parts: sky, earth, and river. In the Savannah country, which is without mountains or other natural configurations, the sky appears as a separate region in relation to the earth. The river reflects both earth and sky. The crops and grass have need for the sky to send rain and the river to rise. They need, as well, fish from the river. The Shilluk must have these agencies for the

sustenance of themselves and of their herds. The three regions, earth, sky, and river, have values and associations which make the division significant in Shilluk religion and cosmology as well as in their economy (Forde 1955: 145).

It seems to be evident that Shilluk cosmogenetic concepts are based upon their belief in Nyikang, with whom all subsequent kings of the Shilluk have been identified. He is the power which creates, provides for, and sustains the universe. He is the one who has made a pattern of life for the Shilluk, and the Shilluk are concerned with having this way of life perpetuated.

The death of a king and the installation of another king are important crises in the life of the Shilluk, and these crises are followed by ceremonies of deep significance to the Shilluk. The office of the king means more to the people than the king himself, whether he is good, bad or indifferent, because it represents the true order of their universe.

Traditions current among the Nuer put their origin somewhere west of the Bul country of the present day to the north of Bahr al-Ghazal. Their country was called Kwer-Kwong, "the barren place of Kwong", the ancestress of the Nuer. This land was waterless and without grass. On the verge of starvation they moved eastward via Duk into the Bul country in search of food. A certain Gau who came from heaven, married Kwong by whom he had two sons, Gaa and Kwook, and a number of daughters. As there was no one with whom these could marry, Gau assigned

several daughters to each of his sons, and in order to avert the calamities that follow incest he performed the ceremony of splitting a bullock longitudinally decreeing that the two groups might intermarry but that neither might marry within itself. Gaa being the elder son took the right side of the bullock and thus became Kwar muon, the Land Chief, the most important man in the tribe. He also became Kwor twac, the Chief of the Leopard Skin. Subsequently Kir, who was found in a gourd, by marrying the eldest daughter of Gaa became the ancestor of the Gaajok, Gaajak, and the Gaagwang sections of the Jekan tribes (Seligman 1932: 207).

A tradition of the Nuba states that in the beginning God (Misalli Malame, God of the Sky) planted a gourd on the top of Jabel Tullishi. The gourd grew, ripened, and split open; a man and woman stepped forth--the ancestors of the Tullishi tribe.

They had numerous offspring. One day they quarrelled, no one knows why, and parted company; the man, with some of the children, moved to the eastern side of the hill, the woman, with the remaining children went to the western side. The children who stayed with the father were many and strong while those with the mother were few and weak. Filled with hate against each other, the man and the woman each forbade their children to cross the other side of the hill under penalty of being bewitched by the other parent (Nadel 1947: 323).

Mbori, the supreme being of the Azande, is believed to have created the earth, water, fire, air, and animals. It is related

that Mbori enclosed all the creatures of the world in a round canoe which he sealed up except for one hole, which he plugged with wax and marked with mbiango juice. Then he sent for his sons, Sun, Moon, Night, Cold and Stars, to visit him as he was dying. When they came, the task was set before them of opening the canoe and of discovering what it contained. Sun was the only one who was able to do this, for the reason that Mbori's messenger had told him the secret. When Sun broke the wax, there came out from the canoe men, animals, trees, rivers, hills, and grass (Baxter and Butt 1953: 95).

C. MYTHOLOGY

Ethnologists have for some time concerned themselves with the origin and inter-relationships of the various Nilotic tribal elements. It has been found that the only information available is that furnished by the myths and traditions given by word of mouth from the Nilotes.

Seligman assumed that the Nilotic cradleland lay somewhere to the east of the Great Lakes. From this cradleland there emerged two waves, made up of a series of movements. These two waves he called the Shilluk wave and the Dinka wave, the latter giving rise to the Dinka and Nuer, the former to the Luo, Annuak, Acholi and others less characteristically Nilotic, because of their contact with a different people pressing forward from the western side of the Nile-Congo divide (Seligman 1932: 18).

Nyikang is the hero in most of the myths and traditions of the Shilluk. He is the culture hero, founder of the nation, whose acts and words have been hallowed in myths. He is regarded as divine. The Shilluk say that he did not die, but disappeared in a whirlwind while a festival was held at Akurwa, the capital of the most northernly portion of the Shillukland and also the place of one of the most important shrines of Nyikang. The Shilluk believe that Nyikang can be found in animals, places, and people. When a reth, or king, sits upon a royal stool, the moment he is installed or invested with kingly power, the Shilluk say that he is at once possessed by the spirit of Nyikang, and thus the founder of the nation, Nyikang, lives again in the installed king.

Among the Nuer, it is said, when the beasts broke up their community and each went its own way and lived its own life, man slew the mother of cow and buffalo. Buffalo said she would avenge her mother by attacking men in the bush, but cow said she would stay among men and avenge her mother by causing disputes about debts, bride-wealth, and adultery which result in fights and deaths. Thus, this feud has gone on between cow and man through the ages, and day by day cow avenges the death of her mother by causing the death of men. So Nuer say that their cattle will be finished together with mankind, for men will all die on account of cattle, and cattle and men will cease together (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 49).

The following story tells of the coming of fire among the Nuer. One day dog set out to hunt for fire. He came to the village of a snake who was cooking food. When he arrived, they said, "Make way for the traveller," and moved aside. He sat down by the fire and suddenly wrapped his tale around a burning stick and swiftly ran away with it. Snake ran after him but could not overtake him. He brought the burning stick back with him and gave it to the people and said, "Blow the fire." The people soon cooked their food with fire (Huffman 1931: 88-89).

The question, what happens to man after death, is answered in the following Nuer myth: A Nuer woman named Nyaajung died. She became a joah (spirit). As such, she wandered about in a new land. When she had moved around for awhile, she discovered on the bank of a pond a large number of jovial young people who bathed and exercised themselves in the pond in accordance with good Nuer custom. The rest of the people were in the villages. When the joog (spirit under the earth) saw that the new joah had come there, they began to deliberate with one another. One side said, she may come and remain with them. The other side vigorously opposed and demanded that she return thither whence she had come. The last proposal became final, so she returned again. She found her body still unburied by her hut. The supposed-to-be-dead sneezed violently and rose up. She told the people of her journey in the land of joog, and emphasized that there is no reason for tears when anyone dies because he may go

then into another beautiful land, the land of ancestor-spirits (rool joogna). If one of her children should die she would not weep, for she now knew that they went to a beautiful land (Crazzolara 1953: 186-187).

D. SPIRIT WORSHIP

Sudanese religion is saturated with all kinds of animistic elements. Animals and plants are endowed with supernatural forces like those of men. The Sudanese believe in these forces, some of whom are personified as gods in animistic fashion but are nevertheless potent forces in their pattern of life. These spirits consist of the ancestors and the powers of nature. These powers demonstrate themselves in storm, rain, rivers, lakes, wells, rocks, trees, charms, and other objects. Magical charms are used for teething and other purposes. Ancestors are appealed to in cases of disputes or feuds over land. Sky gods are called upon for rain. Magical acts are innumerable in Sudanese life, and all over Africa for that matter. The hidden power is believed to be inherent in charms, in medicines and in ceremonial actions of warriors, hunters, fishermen, and tribesmen in general.

Spirit worship is ubiquitous in Shillukland. Juok Nam, the river spirit, pulls down people to itself from all lodgings or houses which are believed to be underneath on the bottom of the river, full of poor men's sacrifices and cows. Juok tim, the forest spirit, leads men astray in the forest and holds them fast in his provinces. Juok loc, the seducer, is the spirit who provokes men to wicked deeds and is still of all spirits the best known among the Shilluk.

These separate spirits have indeed been created by the creator, but they are set forth according to Shilluk concept as self-governing. Their conduct as concerns men is never for the best. The Shilluk pay very little attention to them and give them absolutely no public worship. There is also another species of spirits who appear never to be souls of the dead. Their joy stands in this, that they have spurred men to wickedness and have stirred in them envy and hate.

The ajwogo or wizard is the leading priest among the Acholi who functions in the great religious festivals of the land. At present the Shilluk do not carry out the juok-kult in their practice, and also the ajwogos have lost their original solemn power which has been usurped by the priests of the ancestor-cult. The baret (priests) govern for the public the great and solemn functions. The king of the land is the leading priest, that is he is a baret, and not an ajwogo. But even though the ajwogo does not govern for the public the great and solemn festivals as formerly, he must not be regarded as a forgotten personality, on the contrary the ajwogo is in practical life necessary for the Shilluk. Accordingly, even now, the daily life has been embraced with superstitions, fear, suspicion, malevolence and malignity. Each moment one uses the ajwogo in order to do wickedness easily and to restrain evil.

While the baret makes universal sacrifice for the well-being of the entire land or community, the ajwogo engages himself only

with small sacrifices when evil threatens from a hostile side, and has in all of his actions always the savour of a carrier of mischief and originator of evil. Good as well as wicked supernatural powers have been embodied in the ajwogo-men. Usually a district of the ajwogo utilizes power for itself and for the wickedness of its neighboring district. One ajwogo works against the other. The ajwogo works with juok's secret or mysterious power which lives in him and which imparts to him inspiration, vision, and fits. The mysterious power which ought to work lies in great measure in the ajwogo who uses ceremonies or medicine plants for the purpose of making his remedies effective.

An ajwogo can also be a baret at the same time. An ajwogo can be recruited from both sexes. No matter whether male or female, each ajwogo shall be installed solemnly for his or her office, but greater solemnity, naturally, is held for the male representative. The power which the ajwogo possesses was conferred upon him through installation. Each ajwogo-office presumes a kind of school and instruction which extends particularly to the use of plants. Through long union with an experienced ajwogo the initiate shall be brought into the mystery. Herein lies the difference of the ajwogo from the baret. The baret, without instruction attains office only by the power of his dreams and epileptic fits. The office of ajwogo is hereditary (Hofmayr 1925: 208-211).

E. LIFE AFTER DEATH

Among the Nuba it is believed that the spirit of the dead stays in the grave, but on occasions comes out to visit relatives and appears to them in dreams. Ornaments and sheep are placed in the grave for the spirit likes to look upon sheep.

The Dinka believe that every human being has within him a spirit which moves out of the body at death and stays around the house or burial place until a shrine is made for its abode.

The spirit of the ordinary or common man who dies among the Nuer, in the conception of the tribe, stays in the ground or moves about. If a man is struck by lightning, dies suddenly, or vanishes in a dust storm, he is called Col wac (a special spiritual power). The Col wac does not remain in the grave or wander about but is taken by God to the sky.

The Shilluk and Annwak have similar ideas of life after death to that of the Nuer, the Dinka and other Nilotic tribes.

Pan juok (the country of the dead) is reached after the spirit has wandered through the bush but it is believed by the Shilluk that the spirit moves in and around the grave. Offerings and sacrifices are made by the head of a household or local lineage on behalf of the descendants. In the case of sickness or misfortune, a sacrifice is made in order to propitiate the ancestors (Butt 1952: 64).

Azande belief in life after death is correlated with their concepts regarding conception. At conception, it is believed

that the spirit of the father enters the womb of the mother and a new life is formed. Mother and father must contribute mbisimo (spirit), or else the union will not be fruitful. Whenever a boy is born the mbisimo of the father is stronger, and correspondingly, when the mbisimo of the mother is stronger a girl will be born. The mbisimo becomes atoro, or spirit, and lives near the heads of streams or visits the shrines. In addition, the Azande becomes, at death, the totem of the clan--a plant, an animal, or an object of some kind. This totem is the result of the right hand which does not decay after death as does the body but changes into the totem of the clan (Seligman 1932: 534).

From their stories we learn that the Shilluk regard the other world as entirely analogous to the earthly world. One such story says an old woman came in a dream to the realm of the dead. She saw several farms, each on a separate hill as the king's village in Fashoda. The people saw that everything was quiet, noiseless, just as they built a house on a hill while King Nyakwac was still living. Thereupon the old woman soon died and the dream proved to be true. So the kings live a life on their hills which is similar to their existence in the world. They have their service, wives and children, cows and milk, and have no troubles. Each maintains as sacrifice a milk cow with calf on the grave.

It is said of the Jur that they rejoice to die for over there in the other world wey ba to, u ca paro juok (the soul does not die, it goes in the village of juok), and there it rests and

sleeps at will, there are no more anxieties. Also the Shilluk carry on the customs in the realm of the dead entirely similar to life as in the earthly existence. They feel no need or want, except they have to eat, but they carry their life pursuits wider, as hunting, fishing, dancing and so forth, in order to supply a change in their life. The realm of the dead is in the wak (steppe) a wonder land where man arrives unnoticed after a month's journey.

Arabic stories of the way of the soul over a narrow path are well known in the world of Shilluk. The Shilluk say that life is the highest good; that the greatest evil is death. Death atones for everything. After death each one goes to the pan juok (Land of God), to Nyikang and to the ancestors. All evil shall be discharged through death, which the dead send from revenge for past offence. The fear of this curse (cven) is the only guiding or direct motive in the whole moral life of the Shilluk (Hofmayr 1925: 207-208).

F. SPIRITS AND GODS

The Nuer divide their invisible, spiritual beings into two groups, the nature-spirits and the ancestor-spirits. The nature-spirits fall into two groups: kuudh pieny, the earth spirit and kuudh duona, the air spirit. The first are called also kuudh te toana, little spirits or gods in contrast to the second kuudh mediid, great spirits or gods. The designation kot mediid has been reserved for the Great God, the Highest Being.

Spirits play an important role in the life of the Nuer. The Nuer know of the existence of a number of beings which stay exclusively on earth over or under its surface; they have nothing to seek in the sky or in heaven. They also call the little-spirits goad koodh, children, that is, creatures of God; they are creatures of God like men. These beings are spirits of nature and are invisible; they pass current as immortal like human souls.

With reference to their power, no Nuer will assert that they can create anything, they are not masters of nature, they cannot make rain, they cannot produce off-spring; that remains the exclusive domain of the Kot Mediid (Great God). From this it shall be taken, that they are more capable than men, that they know more, especially that they foresee the future, and thereby they are able to know the situation, what it brings to men. One of their most important powers which gives them acceptability is that they are able to avert fortune or misfortune in many cases. This accounts for the great apprehension of the Nuer in that these spirits cannot be regarded merely as neutral but rather as inimical to man. These spirits stand, more or less, in a similar relation to God as man. God grieves in general but not concerning their doings and their intrigues, thus everywhere they do evil against God's work. Concerning their character, their ideals, they conceal their desires and passions largely with those of men. They require good meals, flesh-pots, beer, and

they delight in the dance. Of sexual instinct with them, one hears nothing.

With reference to the land of spirits (Cien Kuudhna) the Nuer say in general, Kuuth teke door, that is, the spirits are in the steppe, the savannah, in the wild uninhabitable grass-land, or kuuth cianke ne door, that is, the spirits stay as usual in the steppe, an uncultivated, far removed, unknown land from men.

As to spirit-possession, there are three ways of possession among the Nuer (a) inheritance (b) seizure and self-revelation of the spirit and (c) purchase. When anyone has a juok (spirit) it goes, after his death, into the possession of a member of his family, when such exists. This happens through free choice of the spirits themselves, which feel themselves bound to the family. It requires then of necessity the consent, or better, the invitation or summons of the spirits by the successor. With possession of the farm, the new owner of the farm invites all the spirits together to remain with him. He says E kuudh gwaar, E coore dag door, biang ke ga, yen diaal, that is, spirits of my father, you would not scatter in the steppe, all come to me. He takes over with it the spirits of his father--ce kuudh gwan kan.

With possession a thaak (unfruitful cow or ox) shall be sacrificed; when there is no ox, a sheep suffices; when also that fails, then a cucumber (kwool). An unfruitful cow (bod) is equivalent to a thaak and can stand in its stead.

With reference to seizure or self-revelation of the spirit, one begins to tremble, to shake, to gesticulate, to shriek in an entirely ecstatic manner. One says then, ci kot kaaf, the spirit has seized him, or caa kaaf, he was besieged. The jests, shakes and shrugs are of such a manner that one can and must conclude from them that he is mostly, or entirely under the influence of certain spirits.

The matter of spirit possession through purchase is a very usual means to come into the possession of a juok or spirit. Through purchase, the spirit is acquired by the person and also the waal, the charm, which possesses almost the characteristics of the spirit itself. In individual cases it is questionable whether one has to do with a juok or with a waal. Whoever is in possession of a juok (The kuudh duona, the air or sky spirits, are not, however, articles of commerce) can also give therefrom to others. Such ji-kuudhna (priestly spirits) who have made for themselves a name can do this. Anyone who has a strong juok is solicited by many. He may relinquish or communicate to them a similar strong juok. There is scarcely a fortunate possessor who would lose the opportunity to make a good revenue. A great deal of spiritual business passes with juok.

The home of the air spirits, according to Nuer perception, is in the clouds. Kuudh ti dit e ken, beke pfwoora, that is, there are great spirits, they come from the clouds; ke gaad koodh, luunyke kot piny, jah ke e kot, that is, they are children,

creatures of God; God sends them down, they shall be sent of God. They shall, kodh duona (pl. kuudh duona), that is, be called spirits of fresh light wind.

Separate names of famous air spirits are: diu, deei, dhool, maana, (Maadi) teeny, guug, pool (clouds); jiaar (shoulder-blade), wuoon, marr, tuutjoog, nyan or pfaai (little extended clouds, cay (sun, which would be seen during the night)). The activity of air spirits is essentially analogous to that of earth spirits (Crazzalora 1953: 133-162).

G. LUCK AND CHANCE

In a deeply religious climate where one's basic needs are regarded as being dependent upon the spirits it is not difficult to see how one would reach out for any spiritual force that could bring good fortune. Luck and chance then would have, and in the case of the native of the southern Sudan do have, great significance in his spiritual world. Whether sowing or reaping, hunting or fishing, whether engaged in war or in peace, he is enmeshed in a world of spirits, of luck and of chance. His charms and other devices are to ward off danger and to bring him luck. It must not be thought, however, that he is dependent only upon the charm which he may wear. He wears the charm with the awareness that the occult power in the charm is what gives him luck. It would seem then that the charm is but symbolic of the power which it represents.

Everywhere in the land of Shilluk twins are regarded as a blessing. Triplets are feared. They call twins nywole juok (children of the great spirit--extraordinary gifts of heaven) and ceremonies are performed to guard the lives of the twins from all evil. They are also regarded as luck among the Acholi but as ill-luck among the Dinka.

In order to have luck in new arable land and a rich harvest a hen and a pipe must be sacrificed and buried at different points at the same time. On the other hand, anyone who would destroy the field of his neighbor brings, at night, eggs and tobacco and buries them in the arable land of his neighbor while no harvest is being produced in order to cause harm. A twisted yec (magic grass) shall be tied to the bow of a ship on its first journey in order that it may always have a lucky journey. Anyone who jostles or pushes against a girl on her honeymoon early in the morning has luck; ill-luck when old people come in the way (Hofmayr 1925: 222-227).

Spears leaned against a house or tree with points downward will cause game to come to the owner of the spears. In the event one should pass a peru juok (the ceremonial structure built at the birth of twins) in any village on the way to a hunt, additional virtue will accrue to the spears provided they are reclined against it. In order for a hunter to have luck when he sees game, he throws his spears on the ground, jumps over them, and on taking them up he takes up some of the soil with them and throws them in the direction of the game. The word wingo, which usually means bird, is regarded also as a guardian spirit which attends

human beings and animals during life. This guardian spirit, achulang (nightjar), similar to the ordinary bat, is considered to bring the greatest of good luck should a pennant-winged nightjar flutter over the spears on the night before a hunt (Driberg 1923: 120, 226).

Among the Nuer it is believed that it will harm the cattle for a woman to drink milk during her menstrual period or to eat food which has been cooked in a utensil in which milk has been boiled. In the event a woman is impregnated while nursing a child a small piece is cut from the ear of a dog and placed around the child's neck to avert harm from the child. Should one walk in the footsteps of the father of this child he may be subjected to evil portents--his head may split down the back. If a child should have an attack of vomiting just after strangers have visited a village, the strangers are thought to be responsible for it. A sacrifice is offered to prevent further harm to the child. It is also believed that a bunch of a certain kind of grass standing near the door will keep harm from anyone who is sick on the inside.

Some illustrations of the practice of the evil eye are as follows: The evil eye is supposed to harm whatever it sees, whether a person, a sore, or even a newborn baby. The disease becomes worse, the sore refuses to heal, and such misfortunes are attributed to the influence of the evil eye. Charms are

placed upon its body and fastened to its necklace or wristlet. A rope is stretched out in the yard so that strangers will know that they are not welcome. The brother of the father of twins must sacrifice a sheep before he eats with him so that no harm will come to the babies (Huffman 1931: 43-58).

H. SACRED OBJECTS AND PLACES

Among the Dinka, strings of beads of ostrich eggshells, a stool and rope, the hide of a bull sacrificed at the installation of a Spear-Chief, are objects regarded as sacred. Even the spear (bith) of the Spear-Chief is regarded as sacred. The Spear-Chief has other sacred objects connected with his office, a sacred cow, a sacred fishing spear, and a bundle of small axes found in front of a mendyor's house (A mendyor is a descendant of a holy man or of an incarnate spirit). The sacred spear (tong de yat) is the most important object among the Dinka. Even an ordinary spear may become a tong de yat if all members of the mendyor elders of the tribal section agree to it (Butt 1952: 125).

The Nuer regard as sacred the crocodile, the lion, birds, and plants. What is sacred to one Nuer lineage may not be to another. Some lineages respect certain rivers and streams. However, rivers for the Nuer as a whole are associated with Buk Mandeang, the mother spirit, and Buk Mandeang is held in high esteem by all Nuerland. Some lineages have high regard for cattle with certain markings and others for gourds or snakes,

sacred animals or totems. While these are found to exist among practically all Nilotic groups of the Sudan they are regarded as being of more importance among the Dinka than any other tribal group.

The Shilluk have regard for trees which are near the shrines of dead kings, "for it is thought that the tree has sprung from one of the logs used in the making of the grave" (Seligman 1932: 87). Not only are trees near the shrine of dead kings but also trees in the bush and in or near villages are objects of reverence by the Shilluk, and these trees are regarded as having supernatural power.

Among the Acholi juok are connected with particular places and objects, especially with a kind of tree called kitoba and olwa, in or near which they live frequently in snake form. One breaking off the branch of such a tree would die unless the ajwaka (medicine man) performed a ceremony to save him. Small trees of this particular species have no juok. Added to these there are also juok in the form of snakes, of water courses, and hills, and other juok have the form of hairy and long-headed dwarfs (Seligman 1932: 126-127).

On a prominent and detached hill on the south side of Midob, which is west of the Kordofan-Darfur boundary, there is a broken block of granite, two and a half feet high, lying at the foot of Jebel Udru. This holy rock was called by MacMichael Telli (northern dialect) or Delli (southern dialect), and the same word in the Midobi language means God. Over it is built a rough

hut of boughs, which is repaired yearly before the ceremony, but left in bad repair for the greater part of the year. The rock which he saw in 1917, was still covered with milk stains. Another smaller boulder near by had similar stains upon it and some stones and cow dung on the top of it. This sacred boulder was referred to as the son or younger brother of the larger one, and the reason of its having also been honoured was said to be that the hut built over the big boulder had so consistently fallen to pieces that the people thought that the rock was perhaps annoyed at the neglect shown to the smaller boulder, so they began making offerings to both. The stones and cow dung had been placed upon the smaller boulder by the children in play. The ceremony in Udru is performed by certain old women of the Ordarti section, who inherit the privilege from mother to daughter. The offerings of milk, fat, flour, meat, etc., are handed by the votaries to these old women and by them placed on the rock. The rest of the people stand some way off and pass the time jumping and dancing and singing (MacMichael 1922: 63).

As to places regarded as sacred there are many such in the Sudan. Among the Shilluk there are ten cenotaph "tombs" of Nyikang, the culture hero and founder of the Shilluk in Shilluk territory. Two of special importance are one situated at Akurwa, almost in the northern part of Shilluk country on the western side of the White Nile and Feniakang, to the south on the east side of the White Nile. In each shrine there are two or more

huts of the same circular form, with a circular enclosure, called ludi, fenced with stalks of millet. The huts and the enclosed area are sacred and only the priests of Nyikang or attendants whose duty it is to keep them clean, can enter or even go near without due cause. The attendants and priests of the royal grave shrines and cenotaph shrines of Nyikang are called bareth (king's wives). However, the term includes certain old men, ex-wives of kings, old men and women liable to epileptic attacks. Epileptic attacks are regarded as being indicative of possession by Nyikang. The bareth keep the shrines clean, receive the sacrifices, and officiate in ceremonies (Seligman 1932: 177).

The kac, the ancestral shrine is found in northern Acholi-land. This kac or shrine is a small table of smooth stone, supported by smaller pieces of the same stone. Offerings are placed beneath it to appease the ancestral spirit connected with the shrine. In some cases the shrine may be no more than a single stone placed at the foot of a tree. Sometimes two or more shrines, abila or kac, are erected, each one representing a different ancestor. A small tree is always on the side of the shrine, or branches of a tree used for hanging up hunting trophies, the remains of sacrifices, and also for shade for the ancestor. The souls of ancestors are thought of as coming into the shrines on specific times to eat the sacrifices. During such times the shrines are sacred, and are repaired for such purposes,

but during intervals they are allowed in many cases to fall apart (Butt 1952: 88).

On the establishment of a new home by an Azande, a tuka or shrine is erected in the center of it to the spirit (atoro or atolo) of his father. This is constructed of a mound of earth into which there is placed a four or five foot long stick of sassa or doma wood, split at the top with the ends separated and held apart to form a kind of basket. Prior to setting up the tuka, the stake or long wood, is rubbed with ashes from the first fire used in the new homestead and a sacrifice is made at this shrine soon after its construction. Usually a selection of fresh fruits and the liver of the first animal killed by the head of the homestead are placed in the basket, but other than this, offerings are not regularly made. There is exception to this, however, in case of death or adversity, or when sickness is attributed to anger of the spirits.

Mbori, the Supreme ^Being of the Azande has no priests, shrines or holy places or rituals connected with him. However, in case of drought or some kind of misfortune, a thanksgiving ceremony is performed for past favors of good crops and to seek assurance for future land productivity (Baxter and Butt 1953: 94-95).

All over the Dinka territory shrines are found where offerings are made. In these shrines there are sacred objects, spears, stools of copper or brass, shields, pots--which are regarded by the Dinka as having been brought by Dengdit, (Great Rain) a spiritual agency, when he came down to earth.

The following sacred objects may be found among the Dinka:

Yiik de yat (the sacred mound). This is made up from bones of sacrificial animals which have been collected and buried in front of a mendyor elder's house.

Beg mendyor (the beads of the descendant of the holy man) are strings of beads made from ostrich eggshells presented to the Beny Rem, the spiritual head of the tribe, upon his installation and worn by him around his neck.

Bwang yat (the sacred hide) is a hide of a bull sacrificed on the day of installation of the Beny Rem. It is kept in the sacred hut of the Beny Rem and used by him in the time of battle for rain making.

Kol and ywen yat (the sacred stool and sacred rope), the hide of two of the bulls used as sacrifice in the installation of the Beny Rem made into a rope and a stand of mon-grass, tied with strips of the hide on which it is to rest. Every member of the section is called upon to tie some ornament into the rope of beads, iron, or brass rings and the Beny Rem keeps this in his hut. In time of battle or epidemics or cattle plague he brings it out, ties it between two trees to immunize those who pass under it.

Tong mendyor (the spear of the mendyor), similar to the tong de yat, is a badge or insignia of office which the Beny Rem uses in curing sickness and for everyday or general purposes.

Tule yat (the sacred tula) is a bunch of, or a number of small axes with handles, which keeps away wild animals and enemies. Prayers are said to it at sunset (Sudan Notes And Records 1948: 53-57).

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CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

A. PROFITIATION

Sacrifice as a means to propitiate the spirits or gods is a significant element in the native religions of the Sudan. This is seen in all the ceremonies of the Nilotes, whether in the installation of a reth, or king, among the Shilluk; a Beny Rem, or leader of the tribe, among the Dinka; or the initiation or burial of any spiritual head. Ceremonies of one kind or another are engaged in to avert the anger of capricious spirits and to propitiate evil spirits. From the day of one's birth to the day of one's death, and even after death, sacrifice is offered. This applies to birth, circumcision, marriage, death and burial, war, hunting, fishing, almost anything involving the everyday life of the tribe or members of the tribe as individuals.

Nilotes regard all natural phenomena as being in some way connected with gods and spirits. Disease, storms, lightning, thunder, seed time, harvest, rainfall are occasions for offering sacrifice. Any type of calamity among men, beasts, fields or houses is indicative of the anger of the gods and demands sacrifice as atonement for these ills.

Among the Anuak and Shilluk who regard their king as divine, the king was put to death when he became senile in

order to prevent his increasing weakness from weakening the people and the animals. In Shilluk-land the king with two virgins was placed in a hut and sealed up and left to die.

Here the king is the representative of the hopes, aspirations, and well-being of the people, a kind of daysman or umpire between God and man, and thus his senility is regarded as being detrimental to this relationship and he was sacrificed.

The Dinka believe that every human being has a soul or spirit, atiep or tien, which is thought to leave (yot) the body at death and to remain around the house or burial place until a bour (shrine) is made for it. The atiep of a father, mother or ancestor may at any time ask for food in a dream. If food were not provided the atiep might make the dreamer or his wife ill. The death feasts among the Nilotes are observed to propitiate the atiep and to prevent it from sending sickness or calamity upon the survivors. As a general statement, it may be said that the spirit of a person recently deceased is spoken of as juok, but on a whole, this term is used for spirits of powerful ancestors who have long since died.

When annoyed or neglected, the juok may send sickness, bad luck, or even death, however, they are the guardian spirits who are interested in the acts of their survivors and stand ready to help them. This^{is}/no less true of the atiep. The spirits of the old and powerful dead, (juok), and of the recent dead (atiep), live in and around the villages where their descendants

live. Juok are regarded as being more powerful than atiep. Sometimes shrines are built for them and their habitat is thought of as being in the immediate vicinity of these shrines. Juok demand to be propitiated freely by sacrifices. Sacrifices offered to them on stated occasions are not sufficient but by dreams to their descendants they may demand additional sacrifices. To reject their demands would mean misfortune which can only be propitiated by means of sacrifice.

When a man is ill a bullock, or one or more sheep or goats must be killed as a sacrifice to the juok. The animal, or animals, provided by a relative, should be killed preferably by the father of a large family. Some of the meat is left (over) in the house of the sick man for the juok. The next morning it is brought and eaten by the clansfolk but the fat, placed in a pot, is left in the house of the juok for another night. The next day it is cooked by the old women who eat it with the old men. The blood of the sacrifice is left to dry on the ground and is afterwards buried in front of the house close to the place where the animal was killed.

Barrenness is sometimes attributed to the displeasure of the juok and unless the husband confesses his own impotence as the reason, a tiet is consulted. Tiet are men and women who are able to see, and to communicate with, the spirits atiep and juok. A tiet may suggest as a solution to this problem that the husband give more cows to his father-in-law to appease the

juok of the wife's family, or he may prescribe an offering be made by the wife's family; for the juok of the husband's family may need appeasement for the brothers of the wife who might have sneered at her husband.

Certain annual sacrifices are also made to the juok. One or more young goats may be sacrificed at the beginning of the wet season by the Dinka in order that the juok may not injure the cattle in the lwak (Dinka shrine and cattle byre). Among the Cic, a Dinka tribe, an annual sacrifice is made by every householder in order that the millet may not be poor and the cattle may not sicken and die.

A sacrifice is made to the "river people" after the rains when the people come from their inland homes to the dry-season encampments on the river banks and before building any shelters or cattle-kraals. On reaching the river, each clan kills a sheep, cutting its throat before sunrise on the bank, in order that the blood may flow into the river where the sheep is thrown as soon as it dies. This sacrifice is made to propitiate the river people to prevent sickness to men and cattle and to propitiate Dengdit as well, a spiritual agency of the Dinka, literally, Great Rain (Seligman 1932: 184-192).

Probably no two ceremonies are more illustrative of the factor of propitiation in the religious practices of the Nilotes than the rain-making ceremony at the beginning of the

month (alabor), at the new moon (the Shilluk calendar is lunar), and the harvest festival held when the millet is cut, usually at the end of the rains. These ceremonies are held to propitiate the gods for rain and the ingathering of a successful harvest.

For the rain ceremony a cow and a bullock are given to Nyikang, the leader, culture hero, and first king of the Shilluk nation. The bullock is killed while the cow is added to the herd belonging to the shrine. The bareth, or priest, slays the bullock with a sacred (bith) spear before the door of the shrine, while the king stands close by the bullock praying in a loud voice to Nyikang for rain and holding a spear pointing upward. The meat is then eaten by the bareth while the bones and as much blood as can be collected in a gourd are thrown into the river, and the skin is used as a mat for Nyikang. Millet preserved from the last harvest is made into beer.

In a more elaborate rain ceremony, a bullock, a bull, and a hen are killed before the shrine of Nyikang. This is done by one of the bareth of the shrine. The ground within the enclosure of the shrine is swept by old women before the ceremony. Drums are placed near the center of the village and men and women dance violently, holding spears and other weapons, lifting their heads with songs and praises to Nyikang. The chief of the district then at the close of the dance, pours water into his hands, spits into it, and sprinkles the bullock

with it. The bullock is speared, high up on the flank, in such a way that he will not die immediately. If he goes toward the shrine of Nyikang, it is good. Should he fall on his right side it is bad. Care, however, is taken to see to it that the bullock or bull should go to the river, guided of course by experienced Shilluk herdsmen, and come back to the place he was speared. Here he is skinned, cut up, the flesh boiled and eaten by all with the exception of pregnant women, their husbands and men and women who have had intercourse the previous night. No bones of the bullock or bull are broken and the bones with all the fragments are cast into the river. The head, a forelimb and the intestines belong to the shrine attendants. They cook and eat these parts with the rest of the community. The skin, when prepared, is used as a mat in the shrine where the sacred spear is kept and animals for sacrifice are slaughtered.

For the harvest festival ears of millet about to become ripe are thrown into the thatch of certain of the huts making up the shrine. Every one brings a part of the millet to the bareth Nyikang, priest of the shrine of Nyikang. This is ground into porridge with water from the river. Some is poured on the ground within the hut, some poured at the threshold of the hut, thought of as being sacred to Nyikang, and the outside of the hut is also smeared or anointed with some of it. No one must eat of the crop until this has been carried out (Seligman 1932: 80-82).

There is close correlation between crises and propitiation among the native tribes of the Nilotes. Crises are concurrent and recurrent elements in their lives. These crises occur in one form or another, they involve birth, circumcision, puberty, marriage, death, war, feuds, sickness, calamities and other things related to the struggle for existence in a pagan society. These crises bring one into new and often untried experiences. They require help, protection, deliverance, and at such times rites are performed to propitiate the spirits in order that they may prevent these crises or protect from them.

B. PURIFICATION

The Leopard-Skin Chief plays a major role in the matter of purification among the Nuer. In addition to his duties of making settlement of feuds he is concerned with the spiritual welfare of one who has killed another. A man who has killed another may neither eat nor drink until his blood has been let by a Leopard-Skin Chief; ce riem de kam rar (his blood has been let). This ceremony is called birr and is carried out by the Leopard-Skin Chief or one of his relatives. The arm of the murderer is scraped by a fish spear until the blood flows. The killer may not shave his head and his home and cattle-byre are closed.

A bull-calf, known as ruath birre, is sacrificed at this ceremony by the Leopard Skin Chief. Strangely enough the killer is no longer concerned individually and has nothing further to do

except that he must collect the cattle compensation, a substantial proportion of which he must pay.

When compensation has been made, a piec mac ceremony (kindling of fire) is performed by the Leopard-Skin Chief and his helpers at the cattle byre of the murderer. In the meantime the home of the killer has been closed and uncared for and weeds have been allowed to grow. So luak-de cerike luak gwan thunge--(His cattle byre is unclean like a killer's cattle byre). This expression among the Nuer is used in a derogatory manner of anyone considered dirty or untidy. The byre must therefore be ceremoniously purified and swept and fire rekindled (piec mac). The Leopard-Skin Chief and his assistants clean the front and open the byre while the wife of the killer builds the fire screen (kuor), and kindles the fire with fire sticks, after which a sacrifice is made.

When a man is killed a state of feud (ter) begins between the jiran (people of the dead man) and the ji thunge (people of the compensation or kinsmen of the killer). They must meticulously observe certain taboos and avoid spiritual contamination which shows itself in a physical sickness called nueer (a painful kind of diarrhea). The ji ran and the ji thunge must neither eat nor drink together nor must they intermarry. In some cases the observance may go for many generations after the settlement of the feud. The Leopard-Skin Chief may by the performance of certain rites neutralize the effect of spiritual pollution, especially when an involuntary breach of taboo has happened or in some cases

he may be asked to remove the taboo entirely after compensation has been paid and final settlement has been made. This ceremony is called math where the opposing parties partake of food and in particular drink together.

The Leopard-Skin Chief sacrifices an entire bull called the tut ghok, the bull of the herd. This is a purification ceremony to allow the ji ran to drink of the milk of the compensation cattle without being spiritually polluted. The milk of such cattle is believed to be especially dangerous to the relatives of the dead man and will not be drunk until all possible contamination has been obviated by the Leopard-Skin Chief. Subsequently, in the event the parties are agreeable, ghok pale loic (easing of the heart) is handed over, i.e. cattle paid to the kinsmen of the deceased in the final stages of settlement of a feud. Two cows in halves are handed over, one to the father or brother of the dead man and one to the mother appeasing at the same time his kinship group and his maternal relatives. This ceremony is called cuil, a ceremony performed in final stages of composition in blood feuds. The ji ran intimate to the ji thunge, through the medium of the Leopard Skin Chief, that they are willing to make final settlement. This ceremony (math) "expresses the idea of reintegration on the most intimate plane" and then the Leopard-Skin Chief performs certain ritual acts to abrogate the fear of any future pollution between the two groups and to remove the taboo on eating together.

The act of spilling blood brings about a condition of impurity which afflicts the killer, impairs his ritual status, and therefore requires expiation.

Incest is a matter also for purification. The incestuous couple themselves are liable to the supernatural consequences which may be shown in some form of mueer, and their relatives may also suffer from sterility, infant mortality, or other disasters. This act requires expiation by means of ritual and sacrifice.

There are also other breaches of observance which bring about similar types of pollution. It is an offense to have sexual intercourse with a pregnant woman or a nursing mother. A husband who offends as such brings down the indignation of a wife's relatives upon him and he can only neutralize the consequences by ritual purification and sacrifice. The idea of pollution is also present in cases of adultery and a cow is paid in order to counteract the pollution involved. The cow, called yang kale (the cow of the sleeping mat), allows the husband to resume relations with his wife in safety (Howell 1954: 44-46, 209-210).

C. TABOO AND AVOIDANCE

Among the Shilluk, where avoidance may be regarded with more or less details as a representative of the general pattern of the Nilotes, a man avoids all those whom he calls ora (the term ora implies respect and ceremonial behavior when used by

either sex), of whom the first in importance is the wife's mother.

Avoidance of the mother-in-law implies that a man must not enter her house and must never meet her face to face out of doors. In the event a man saw his mother-in-law he would take a different way and send a friend to greet her graciously. Avoidance of certain other women would not hinder a man from entering the house and eating there, provided the woman absented herself and the man sat upon the bare ground. To sit upon a skin which might be a woman's mat would be taboo for such an act might have implications of sexual relations.

The wife's mia, her father's brother's wife, is treated as an ora and avoided. This is also true with reference to a wife's brother's wife who is treated with the respect due to a mother-in-law.

Avoidance is somewhat relaxed a few years after marriage in the event a child is born and has survived. A man may give his wife's mother a goat, but may only enter the house of the mother-in-law provided she is very old. He may speak to her, to her sister, and to his father-in-law, only however, with head averted and with meticulous ceremonial politeness.

Avoidance of the wives of certain of his own kinsmen is observed by man. He may enter the homes of his uma and umia (son of mother's sister and brother and son of mother, wife's brother as a polite form); uwaja, father's sister's son; and una, son of mother's brother, or sons of mother's paternal grandfather's

son; oka, sister's son; and kwa, father's father, mother's father, father's father's brother. He cannot visit them as freely as the house of his uwa, brother (son of father), father's brother's son since he must avoid the wives of all these relatives, while with the wives of his uwa he may be on quite familiar terms. When meeting any of these women on the outside he is only permitted to greet them provided his head is averted.

A man may salute his na, mother's sister, mother's maternal grandmother's granddaughter, but must not sit in the hut with her. She must leave the hut when he enters, and in the event he should sit on her mat or skin it would result in his death, his na, or the wife of his na.

A man may avoid his wife's father, but this avoidance decreases after a time, just as the rigidity of the mother-in-law avoidance decreases. His wife's brother is regarded with respect but scarcely avoided. It is said that nothing would ever relax the avoidance between a man and his wife's mother's brother (her na). They must never speak face to face.

There is no avoidance between women. A woman does not avoid her husband's mother. A man must kill a bull at the death feast of an ora, the father, mother or brother of his wife. Should he live near his wife's family, he must kill a sheep on the day of the death. He must not, however, see the corpse or assist at the burial.

Seligman observed four aspects of the ora relationship:

- (1) The primary attitude to the wife's mother extended on classificatory lines.
- (2) The attitude towards those relatives of the wife to whom she stands in some definite relationship.
- (3) The attitude a man observes towards the husbands of his own female relatives.
- (4) A woman's attitude towards the relatives of her husband.

Avoidance of the mother-in-law is a very common custom in Africa. With reference to this custom two factors are important, respect to the mother of the wife and the feeling that there must be no sexual impropriety with her. Should the young Shilluk, who has not collected enough cattle to marry, desire to exercise his right to consort with the wife of one of his uma (father's brother's sons) he must treat her mother with respect as though he were the actual husband, and if he has not previously adopted this attitude trouble may arise. Should he wish to take the widow of one of his uma as a wife, if he has previously respected the mother-in-law of that uma the way is clear, otherwise she will make objections which may or may not be overcome by gifts.

As to the relationship of a man to his wife's father and brothers, this is governed primarily by the fact that they are her protectors to whom she may complain if her husband should mistreat her. The bride price is given to them and the fact that this may be returned in the event she should be childless

would seem to show clearly that the bride-wealth may be considered as compensation to her family for the loss of her children rather than as payment for a wife. The avoidance of these male relatives of the wife is by no means a general practice. It is not practiced by the Dinka.

Although a man must observe respectful behavior toward the husbands of his sisters and certain cousins, he appears to be in a more favorable position in relation to them in that he receives part of the bride-price given by them for his sisters and certain cousins, and can demand favors from them.

A woman looks only upon her husband's uterine brothers and his mother's sister's sons as her ora. She strictly avoids them, for any semblance of familiarity would be an offence. These relatives of the husband stand in sharp distinction to all others (Seligman 1932: 55-61).

In contrast to avoidance of the face of the mother-in-law, as among the Shilluk, it has been found that a characteristic feature of the Acholi avoidance practices is that instead of the total prohibition to see the face of the mother-in-law the prohibition is against seeing her naked. In the event her son-in-law should thus see her he must give her a sheep which instead of killing it she makes a part of her flock. Since all Acholi women wear fringed aprons a man would probably not see her unless he comes upon her unawares while bathing. On the other hand,

should a son-in-law be seen while he is naked by his mother-in-law she must make beer for all of his local group.

Among the Nuer twins and their close relatives can neither kill nor eat birds. They must also not be where such are killed. From vessels wherein bird flesh has been they must not eat since these might have been connected with the death of their brothers. Birds obviously are regarded by them as taboo.

A twin must have no sexual intercourse with any one, whether legal or illegal, before he has carried out the so-called pfwuut-ceremony. Whoever executes a complete intercourse before this ceremony can have no more children; this has to do as well with a twin as with the opposite partner.

A young twin about eighteen years of age in search of a wife knows that he has to submit to the pfwuut-ceremony. This ceremony seems to represent a kind of pretended marriage where two animals are sacrificed in order to hasten the termination of probation ties.

The youth seeks a girl who is not related to him (nyam gwa) and says "Goonā nee lwomdu" (I want to flirt with you). The girl knows the youth and knows that he is a twin and understands immediately that nothing unseemly is wished of her. After she has consulted with her parents and given him her promise to go with him through the pfwuut-ceremony, he then goes home and informs his parents. His family and the girl's family agree upon the

necessary preparations and the fixing of the proper time. The beginning must be made in the village of the girl. Here everything must be prepared and beer must be kept in readiness, which requires a special day's work. When everything has been provided, the drum is beaten in the evening in the village of the girl as a sign that everything is ready for the coming of the pfwuut. On the day, very early, the drum is beaten. Two two year animals, an ox and a calf, which have been brought from the village of the young man, stand ready. The ox is speared and the calf is fastened to a special peg. Now a cow's rope is placed around the neck of the youth and of the girl; on their wrists they receive a bracelet. Adorned with these things they sit on the floor, one gazing at the other. Behind the girl sits a group of people from her village and behind the youth, the twin, people from his village. They remain in this condition an agreed time, then in all haste the youth and the girl make reciprocal interchange of bracelets, quickly throw away the cord from their necks and leap upward; ci jwei bath, therewith the sickness or curse, has disappeared. Should one still sit there with the rope around the neck while the other stands there without the rope around the neck, that one will suffer evil consequences.

The witnesses then take ashes and throw them in all directions as they begin the regular dance. The pfwuut-dance has been characterized by a peculiar custom; nuenna baa ro rid ne nyer--

the young men change to girls while they put on dresses (ciif, hip dresses) and other female ornamental objects. The girls, on the other hand, become young men, put on fairy bracelets, provide skins around the hips with spears and sticks; it is a dance with exchanged twists but in doing so it does not appear to be improper. After the dance beer is drunk. With this the ceremony is ended in the village of the girl. The entire meat of the killed oxen is carried to the village of the twin and is eaten by the people.

After an agreed span of time of one or more days, the same ceremony is repeated, but now in the village of the twin. The animals, as formerly, are brought, this time from the people of the girl to the yard of the twin. The girl comes very early with her people into the village of the twin. While the two sit opposite with a cord on their necks as already described, the ox is killed, the calf is fastened to a peg and the ashes are thrown in all directions. The people of the girl's village return with the meat of the killed oxen, which they consume alone. With this the full pfwut-ceremony has ended. The twin is now freed from magical impediments in his intercourse with the opposite sex. By this ceremony he has obligated himself in no manner in relation to the girl; he can marry her or another girl.

When the twin is a girl she seeks out a young man to "flirt with him," that is, to go with him through the pfwut-ceremony. The ceremony is first of all carried out in the village of the

youth as already described. Also the dance takes place as mentioned with the interchange of twists between the young man and the girl. Thereafter, however, instead of the girls, it is the young men who begin the regular dance, dressed in girls' costumes. These ceremonies appear to be dying out in many regions.

There are many special objects which are regarded as holy or taboo by Nuer families. These objects have gained their importance from old myths surrounding the death of ancestors.

Whoever holds such sacred objects has influence as an expert or an authority. For according to the old myths, the object venerated by a person gives him the same power of healing as was formerly held by the deceased ancestor or ancestors.

There are people who regard spears as taboo. Of these it is said that one of their ancestors had been found dying on the ground. Near him lay a spear staff without the spearhead. The dying man was assured that the spearhead would be buried in his body and he had to die thereon. He died; ever since that time the spears have been regarded as sacred by his descendants, who are called gwan muot, chiefs of spears. Whoever suffers a spear wound must come to a gwan muot. The gwan muot says, be gooag, meaning, it shall be well. The sick feels himself relieved, the swelling recedes and the gwan muot receives compensation.

The gwan bieth or nol (chief of spear staff) regards the spear as sacred. When a party goes on a great or dangerous hunt, he implores the gwan bieth to bestow his blessings. He goes

for this purpose in the steppe to a place where the hunting party passes by; he fastens a standing grass bush on the way, bends it and makes a slipknot with it. He then sticks his bent spear in the slipknot and places himself beside it while the people go on the hunt. Occasionally, he confers blessings also by spitting on the spears of the participators. When the hunters come home with meat each gives him something of his meat. Also on military expeditions his participation is sought, with or without special ceremonies as a guarantee of success; the booty itself must be gained by force.

When the Kuaar Muon (Leopard-Skin Chief) and his people deliver the compensation for a murdered person he takes care always to have a gwan bieth in his retinue in order to avert danger. While the gwan muot is entitled to take a beautiful pregnant cow for cattle compensation, a little ox (rwaath) is suitable for the gwan bieth. When meat is cooked it must not be stirred with a spear.

A gwan tan, also usually known as chief of spear-staff, solemnly breaks a spear-staff in two in connection with a hunt or military expedition as a mark that the power has been obtained to do injury to the enemy. The act itself is believed to contribute to the defeat of the enemy.

There are also people who regard the placenta as taboo. A tradition has it that a woman died near the placenta which she

was able to dispose of along with the delivery. She said to her brother that help should be given in the future in this connection by massage. Later a woman was confined and could not free herself from the placenta. From then on it has been said that the placenta is holy. The expert has but to come and strike heavily over the body with her hand; immediately the suffering is relieved. This is done also to domestic animals which have placentas. Such animals must not be eaten by the people.

Whoever dies by reason of an illness (koc) in the foot joints, such as snake bite or any other wound, bequeaths to his descendants both the duty to regard the foot joints as holy and the full power to heal this part of the body (Crazzolara 1953: 197-204).

Among the Nuer some tiet practice healing by massage, and can produce stones, bits of stone, and other objects from the body. Each tiet has his own familiar spirit (kwoth). One can cure constipation, another yaws, yet another, called tiet dola, cures headaches and can assist one in retrieving a stolen cow or article. One of their common methods of divining is that of throwing the shells of the fresh water mussel against the convex surface of a gourd rattle and observing their fall. After the tiet dola has performed this ceremony, the patient is supposed to be "tied up", he must therefore perform a second ceremony to "untie" the patient in order to ward off any evil consequences which may accrue to the patient as a result of his action. This the tiet achieves by plucking grass, whirling it around the patient's head and throwing it into the bush.

The ajwago or diviner of the Shilluk claims to be able to give victory in battle and to cure diseases. The ajwago among the Annuak exercises his power against the cljor, a sorcerer, who has the evil eye and has power to implant bones, lizards, and similar objects into the bodies of people, resulting in sickness and death. The ajwago divines the cause of sickness and relieves it. The diviner among the Acholi is comparable to diviners among other Nilotic tribes.

There are several ways among the Nuer to establish the truth by divination. Two parties may agree to arbitrate their dispute through the sacrifice of a sheep. The act is taken very seriously and before the sheep is killed, in most cases, the guilty recants and confesses. If he does not, he is usually of the conviction that he will be punished through kot, the spirit, and the avenging spirit (cyen) of the slaughtered sheep very soon through sickness, death, or some misfortune.

Matters in dispute are placed before the kuaar muon. He seeks to find out the exact cause from the disputants, along with all of the reliable ones. When he himself comes to no decision as to the guilty one, he proposes to the two parties concerned that they submit themselves to the kweel-ordeal. Both of the disputants receive a spade which the kuaar muon takes and digs a rectangular hole of some sixty centimeters long and twenty centimeters wide in the earth. In each corner a spade (pfwuur) is stuck in the ground with the handle upwards. The one taking

the oath must now step over the broadside of the hole between the spades. This is called, baa kweel tet --To lift out of the hole.

Another time the kuaar administers the kaaf-tan ordeal to two disputants. In this ceremony the kuaar sits, clad in a service hide or skin, in his armchair and places the disputants against his spear. Both hold the shaft of the spear and give their explanation. This is called, Ba luh e tan--The shaft shall decide.

Both of these ordeals are regarded solemnly and seriously, and are applied only in important matters of dispute. The people look upon them with holy awe. When two disputants are ready to submit to one of these ordeals, the kuaar calls attention beforehand to the serious meaning of the act as well as to the dire and unfailing consequences of its misuse. Immediately before the ordeal he again earnestly calls upon each one to come forth with the truth in order to obviate the curse of the avenging spirit. Also, the parties concerned do not take the ritual lightly. It often happens that one who is not certain of his cause, or had maintained a false statement, retracts at the last moment and whispers to the kuaar a decisive word. The dispute is then settled accordingly.

D. MAGIC

People who possess certain powers which are thought of as being of benefit to the community are called ajwago among the Shilluk. Their powers are regarded as being related to periodic possession by the spirits of the early Shilluk kings. Sometimes the keepers of the shrine of Nyikang are ajwago. In some cases

the ajwago possesses a gourd of juok. After the gourd is greased, grain is placed in it, and the grain is shaken in the gourd; the rattles are regarded as juok speaking.

The jalyat (man of herbs) deals chiefly in black magic. He is feared greatly and does most of his work at night for the reason that anyone who practices sorcery as the jalyat practices it, is killed when detected by the Shilluk. The jalyat is also regarded as being a monorchid and as such should be drowned at birth. However his father is the only one who has the power to save him. On reaching maturity he cannot be killed unless the whole village should decide to rid itself of some evil the jalyat is suspected of causing. The jalyat in his practice uses parts of the victim's body or objects closely connected with it. He may cause sickness, ruin crops, cause cattle to go barren, bring about accidents, cause the death of children, especially in large families, and is thought to be envious of the prosperous and successful.

The daiyat are regarded as the feminine counterparts to the jalyat, however they are more evil than the jalyat.

The Shilluk are firm believers in the evil eye (ywon), think that it is hereditary or that it may suddenly come upon persons. The evil eye, based principally upon jealousy, anger, and envy brings misfortune or illness upon those who are richer or more prosperous than its possessor (Butt 1952: 64-66).

Waal is the generic name for magic among the Nuer. There are, in addition, a number of special names for magic. Some of these are the following: raan, nyuudh, diir, thaag, and others.

As to the raan, whoever possesses this kind of magic, his lance shall certainly reach the goal. There is generally a cheap kind (thyag kogde) which is helpful to one with fish spears or with hunters in the wood. There is also another, more expensive, kind called bum kogde, which a gwan waal, or magician, singles out to fit the special needs of an individual, especially those of a good marksman to make sure that he can successfully throw his deadly spear against the enemy (gwan teeor).

The nyuudh magic is only in the possession of a few. It is costly and very dangerous. Whoever carries the nyuudh on the arm and applies it with a finger to an animal or man causes his death. Whoever carries this kind of magic on the arm must be very careful not to point carelessly with a finger at friends or relatives lest he cause their death inadvertently.

The diir too belongs to the more expensive waal. It is said that this waal forms a mole around someone's eyes thereby blocking his vision. Whoever carries this magic may strike and wound his enemy in a fight, while the enemy is unable to see any harm inflicted upon the person who owns the diir magic because the magic blocks his vision.

The riel is another very expensive but extremely useful kind of magic. Every evil charm which is sent to one by a kot with evil intent is ineffective against a riel-owner

One of the strongest waal is the very rare waal toony, medicine dwarf. This waal is a particular fixed part of the organism taken from the body of an assassinated somewhat mysterious dwarf (toony of the Nuer). Whoever meets such a dwarf kills him and splits his body open to get the costly waal. Whoever possesses this waal can, by a mere act of the will, cause an unknown enemy who may be far away, to appear in front of him.

There are broader charms which, among other things, give the power to one to work deadly effective magic at a distance. Such magic, of course, is given only upon the particular and expressed request of a client, and for good compensation.

The Nuer find it often necessary to obtain preventive charms in order to obviate the effect of magic directed against them, for without this preventive means they would have no protection and would succumb to the magic of their enemies.

Upon the death of a person, his son takes over the charms he owned. Permission to do so has to be secured through a propitiatory ceremony (kier). A wife or daughter is not permitted to take over these charms.

The word waal means both magic and obviously effective remedies used either externally or internally. The Nuer do not

distinguish between medicine, in our sense, and magic. Both concepts represent for him simply two types of medicine. The effective remedies are known only to the initiated and are carefully guarded in secret. These remedies come, for the most part, from the vegetable world. They are known as waal nyn, medicine for the eyes; waal tof, for syphilis; waal waona for burns; waal killa for coughs; etc.

Persons who possess the evil eye fall into two categories: the niah applies his magic to persons, while the peth, who can be either a man or a woman, practices magic on cattle.

Cattle has the greatest importance with the Nuer. The Nuer live on cows' milk a great part of the year; cattle forms the bride-price paid for a wife; oxen are required for sacrifice. As everywhere in the world, the cows give more milk on some days than on others, and on some days give no milk at all; but since all natural phenomena have a special reason in the eyes of the Nuer, they seek one also here. The absence of milk is believed to be caused by a peth; it is he who takes away the milk with his evil eye.

It is said of a peth that he may be bleary eyed and that his tears, bubble shaped, flow from otherwise sound eyes; these, among other things, designate a peth.

Of the milk it is held that the peth not only steals it with his evil eye, but collects it in his head, so that one can tap on his head and find milk in it. When one owns a healthy fat

calf which naturally excites jealousy, the peth pulls the heart out of the animal and causes it to become poor and lean. The cow's owner, of course, gives vent to his anger, seeks out the suspected peth and attacks him with his spear. This is done with the full consent of the community. In such situations only quick flight saves the peth from injury or death. When the passion of the cow-owner has subsided, the peth returns secretly to his hut.

A niah can be, as the peth, a man or a woman. He possesses a mysterious power which he exercises with his glance, with his eye (ke wande). The niah is believed to have, in most cases, red, sore, and swollen eyes. He either inherits his power from his father or his mother, or he brings it along with him into the world (Crazzolara 1953: 205-214).

Among the Azande oracle magic forms a prologue to all of the more important social, economic, legal, and religious acts. Without the oracle no economic work of any magnitude is started, no crises in man's life are without one or more forms of divination, and likewise, no religious ceremony can be held without first consulting the oracles. Oracles are consulted with reference to the birth of a child, the dangers of delivery to mother and babe, the name of the child, and in order to be assured that it will live. In circumcision ceremonies the boy's circumcision tutor and the father and operator consult the oracle to find out whether

the boy will survive the cutting. No man will contract marriage, nor will any girl's parents allow her to live with her husband without first consulting the oracle. No man will enter a secret society without assurance that he will pass safely through the rites of initiation. When sickness and pain threaten an Azande he will first of all take recourse to the oracle to discover who is injuring him with black magic so that he may be healed. When the cloud of death is hanging over him he will ask the oracle whether he will die. When a man dies his grief-stricken relatives will rely upon benge to tell them how he has died so that he may be avenged (Sudan Notes and Records 1928: 51-52).

Four kinds of magic exist among the Azande: benge, dakowa, iwa, and maringu, with benge holding the most important place of all of them.

Benge is a reddish powder, a strychnine type of poison, made from the dried roots of a plant found on the banks of the Uele River in the Belgian Congo. The Azande who goes to collect benge must observe strict taboos in abstaining from sexual intercourse, must not rub his body with oil, nor eat the meat of dark skinned animals, elephant, fish, and certain vegetables. The benge must even be carried in certain ways. These taboos must be strictly observed or the benge will be of no use, for in addition to being a poison it is a ritual substance which can only be of service if it is properly handled. The benge is always tested by a puta benge, a tester.

In the administration of benge, fowls are handed to the operator while the people who have not observed the necessary taboos sit at a distance. Benge powder is mixed with water as the fowl is held by the wings between the toes of the operator. The operator squeezes some benge down the throat of the fowl. A questioner addresses the fowl, and the operator, after two minutes, gives it a second dose of benge and then a third dose in the event the fowl is a large one. The questioner again addresses his questions to the benge in the fowl, always ending with either of the following two sentences: "If such is the case, the poison oracle will kill the fowl!" or "If such is the case, the poison oracle will spare the fowl." Working up to an oratorical climax the questioner orders the operator to release the fowl. Some birds die almost immediately, others die shortly thereafter, again others remain unaffected. In the event the fowl dies, one of its wings is cut off to be used as evidence. Should it live, it may be used on another day, but never is the same fowl used twice on the same day.

In the dakpa (or dakpwa) or termite oracle the questioner goes to a termite mound towards evening, cuts a branch of dakpa shrub, shakes up the top of the mound in order to expose the tunnels used by the termites and then with a branch in each hand addresses the termites in a manner similar to the one used in the benge, urging them that if such and such is the case, they eat one branch

and spare the other. Then he places the sticks into the mound and returns home. Next morning he returns to find out the answer of the oracle. He wraps up the sticks and carries them home where he places them as evidence in his ghost shrine or the eaves of his hut. The termites may eat both branches or none. In such a case they are thought to be tired or hungry respectively. Should the termites eat the two branches unevenly the verdict will be thought of as a qualified one leaning toward the negative or affirmative according to the terms of the question. The dakpa oracle does not have the same social importance as the benge oracle, so ambiguous answers may be given with reference to this oracle.

The iwa, or rubbing board oracle is the most frequently used one in connection with urgent matters and in matters of minor importance. The board has a female part, consisting of the flat surface of a table held up by two legs, and a male part, which is a lid fitting on top of the surface of the table. When the oracle is to be consulted, the owner places the board on the ground in front of him and grates some wood or squeezes some fruit juice over the table. Then, dipping the lid in a gourdful of water and placing it on the table, he jerks it backwards and forwards. The lid sometimes sticks to the table. The two opposite responses to questions asked are smooth sliding and firm sticking.

The mapingo, or three stick oracle, is the principal oracle of the Mangbetu and Abarambo, related groups of the Belgian Congo.

It is made up out of carefully balanced piles of sticks, some of which fall when a disturbance is made. The answer to a question is predicated on the number of sticks which fall. Among the Azande in the Sudan this oracle is regarded as the oracle of women and children. There are other oracles and dreams which predict the future, these, however, are of minor importance (Baxter and Butt 1953: 87-90).

In some cases magic societies have grown to considerable proportions among the Azande. A case in point is the mani society. At the ceremonial initiation the members are given special names, medicine is eaten, and the forms of greeting used among themselves are learned. Membership is open to women and children as well as to men. Women enter the ceremonial lodge by a separate path and sit apart from the men. The participation of women in the mani society is a departure from the standard pattern of initiations and gives them more freedom. The head of each lodge, the boro basa, purchases the mani medicines and owns a special oracle called yanda. The kenge cooks the medicine during the ceremonies. The magic is the property of the society, is used for the benefit of its members, and only initiated persons in the different grades can perform the rites (Seligman 1932: 532).

Magic is a vital force which the Sudanese are ever on the alert to resort to in order to meet their needs. It is more than a mere charm, more than something mechanical. As far as they

are concerned it is something spiritual, a part of their religion, and a very vital part at that. On many occasions, and for many reasons and purposes magic is used. Something may be lost, a woman may be barren and desires children, a disease may afflict an individual or community, or one may be troubled by dreams or persons, on all of these occasions and many more, magic is resorted to for relief. Magic fills a place in the life of the Sudanese even in the selection of the proper name given to a child at birth, in the method of finding a right husband or finding out who has caused a death, or in any important crisis in life.

The universe for the Sudanese is full of evil forces, and because of these forces man is required to carry out a number of rituals, fixed and seasonal, almost every day of his life. These rituals or magical practices are in every way vital to Sudanese life and religion and are carried out with meticulous care and sincere devotion.

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CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONARIES AND ORGANIZED CEREMONIALS

A. MAGICIANS AND DIVINERS

Religious functionaries, whether priests, mediums, diviners, herbalists, magicians, or prophets, are found in all religions. Religious functionaries are used in one way or another to carry out tribal, as well as group or individual rituals. They are resorted to in the many crises of life for they are generally regarded as intermediaries between God and man.

The Nuer have tiet or specialists in magic acting as leeches and diviners. The spirit of a tiet is a minor spirit, an earth-spirit, such as a totem. A tiet never rises to prominence but is only a local functionary who practices magical acts in his or her own village. A tiet does not hold the same prominence as a guk, or prophet, guided by one of the sky spirits, nor does he attain the eminence of a gwan wal, or magician, who possesses powerful medicine.

The gwan wal are of two types, one type possessing just ordinary medicine wal; the other type having 'talking medicine', inhabited by collective spirits called kulangni.

The following specialists in magic are found among the Nuer:

1. Tiet gweeni, mussel shell diviner. The tiet gweeni divines by throwing mussel shells on the convex surface of a gourd. The gourd contains seeds, therefore when shaken it rattles. The diviner takes the shells, throws them on the gourd from which they fall off on the ground or into the lap of the questioner who sits near by the diviner. The diviner predicates his answer to questions by the way the shells fall. He moves the gourd under his legs or rubs it on his body and speaks to the spirit associated with it. Every tiet gweeni has kwoth, the spirit, to assist him in his magical practices.

2. Tiet dala: Among the several functions of this diviner are, the curing of headaches by taking some grass and whirling it around the head of a sick man after having spat upon the grass, then throwing the grass away and with it the headache; the recovering of lost property, especially cows; assuring safe journeys; protecting warriors from danger by daubing their breasts with lieth in bor, butter.

In the event one is assisted by either the tiet gweeni or the tiet dala, a second rite must be performed in order to be protected from evil consequences which might result from the first rite. The diviner plucks grass and after whirling it around the head of the patient throws it into the bush. The patient was "tied up" (twith) by the first ceremony and has been "loosened" (loyn) by the second.

3. Tiet me ngwet or tiet coli: This diviner performs the usual African trick of removing objects placed in a sick man's body by a witch (peth). This may be a diviner's sole magical accomplishment or it may be combined with other magical functions. Each specialist in this kind of magic derives his powers from a spirit.

4. Tiet me monye dholi: This is an expert in curing constipation in children. He is the one who "anoints" (monye) by spitting on them. If a child is seriously constipated its parents take it to one of these specialists who spits on his hands and rubs the spittle across the child's belly. This action relieves the constipation. This tiet is said to thek, or respect, the actual massage itself which is his kwoth, just as other persons respect their totems.

Beside these specialists there are others who have functions similar to the ones already described, with the addition that they treat barren women and impotent men (Sudan Notes and Records 1935: 67-70).

Some witch doctors specialize in magic which they sell such as doctored whistles, amulets and charms. As a general statement it may be said that all magic is individually owned and may be bought. It is almost exclusively a right given to men, and women do not use it except on a small scale as witch doctors or leeches. Most of the medicine for magic is owned by the older men, however, the possession alone does not of itself carry prestige.

The Azande believe in witchcraft, oracles, and magic, and their belief in witchcraft is thought to provide the background for the function of oracles, and magic. In order to be protected from witchcraft the Azande must take recourse to oracles to detect witchcraft by reason of their own mangu (witchcraft) and they fight against it by the magical properties of the medicines which they have swallowed. Responding to witchcraft, oracles, and magic provides a pattern by which the Azande may direct their lives. It may be said that it is their way of life, for in the final analysis it gives explanation to almost every life situation and gives guidance to appropriate behavior in these situations. In a word, witchcraft, magic, and oracles are means of social control.

B. SECRET SOCIETIES

Secret societies or associations for the practice of magic can be found all over Zandeland. However, they are not indigenous and are still subterranean and subversive.

The magic and rituals of each society have for the most part, or nearly always, been secret and acquired by its members only after initiation and payment. However, the existence of the organizations was not secret, nor was there any secrecy of the purpose or meeting places of these secret societies. Members of the mani society distinguish themselves by wearing a blue bead.

Government restrictions recently forced the societies to keep their rites, membership, and even their very existence secret.

The largest associations were Biri, Mani, Nando, Koira, Siba, and Wanga, of which Biri and Mani were of the greatest importance. All organizations are similar in form but have different objectives and techniques. The main purpose of each, however, is to secure for its members immunity in relation to the established authority.

The Mani society, before it became regarded as illegal, used to meet in the bush near a stream where the members erected a small shelter to protect the pot and the medicines. Here in a clear space they danced and carried out their rites. At present they meet secretly at the homestead of one of the members. The magical devices are hidden among the members. Each society has a leader, a boro-basa or gbia ngua, "Man of the Lodge" or "Master of the Medicines", who is usually the head or founder of the lodge. Such a "master" obtains his technical knowledge of magic from the head of another lodge against a payment, thus qualifying for his position.

Each lodge is independent, its members being connected by social and kinship ties. While heavy payments are exacted from one who aspires to lodge leadership, the leader has the opportunity to receive compensation for his payments by instructing

the junior members of his lodge in the magic art, and, in addition, receives a gift from every initiate.

The kenge (cook) who has charge of the cooking of medicines, the uze (stirrer) who superintends lodge business, and the furushi who acts as sentry are the three junior officials of each lodge. The members of the lodge are known as Aboro Mani, "people of Mani", as opposed to fio, outsiders. The secret greeting among men is usually restricted to lodge meetings.

The progressive grades distinguished by their name and medicines are: water mani (ordinary initiate), blue bead mani (full member), and night or cut throat mani (those who possess a strong medicine that breaks the neck of anyone who seeks to injure its owner). Other grades may exist as a result of magic introduced from a foreign source.

Women and young people, if they can find a sponsor, may join, and the society is almost evenly divided between men and women. Children are allowed to accompany their mothers to the meetings but are not permitted to join. Older men and women of some standing seldom join a society and the mass of the members is made up of youths, maidens, and young married couples.

The Biri or Bili society is also common, although officially outlawed in Zandeland. Its purposes are similar to those of the Mani society. Its special reason for existence,

however, is to protect its adherents against the established authority. Male and female may join. They meet in a large hut in the bush where a fire continually burns. Here they build straw shelters for the initiates. This clearing of the huts is called basa, the name used for boys in the process of circumcision. In these meetings, as with the Mani society, dancing and beer drinking are indulged in. Initiation is much more arduous than in the Mani society. Initiates partake of the nzula (medicine) which gives protection against others and the ability to strike another person. Should a member betray the society, the medicine in his stomach will strike him. New members are called upon to observe certain food prohibitions and must work for their sponsors and the head of the lodge to whom payments must be made from time to time (Baxter and Butt 1953: 91-93).

C. MAGIC JUSTICE

Among the Nuba varied and numerous supernatural devices serve to discover and bring to justice unknown criminals. The diviner, nworo, is consulted and can always tell whether a theft has been committed, but he cannot help further than that. One whose animals were stolen must first of all, after consulting the diviner, present a goat to the local grain priest who will sacrifice it and say: "The man who stole, his dgrim, soul, shall come hither and die with this animal." It is believed that the

thief will die within three or four days unless he repents and returns the stolen animals. One may also appeal to the rain maker of the tribe, paying a goat for the discovery and punishment of the thief. The magic of the rain maker will cause a thief to be killed by lightning. Whenever a person is struck by lightning it is assumed that at one time or another he was guilty of theft. The relatives will immediately offer more goats to the rain maker as well as to the owner of the stolen animals if he is known in order that the curse may be lifted.

In other cases certain persons possess powerful charms bought from Arab or West African charm sellers which are thought to kill evil doers. A man may borrow one of these charms and parade around from house to house flourishing the charm. Then he sits and waits, and after a month or more the thief will either repent or die. This magic is so powerful that even after the sudden death of a suspected thief his relatives will offer to return the stolen animals, for the magic would continue to work until it is stopped by rite of purification.

The charms are known by the Arabic name kitab (literally book), or in vernacular kdam, which also means oath or ordeal in general. One distinguishes between two kinds of charms: kdam kidel buny, aimless, i. e. harmless charm, and kdam kre, bitter charm, possessed of deadly magic.

Another method used is for the owner of the stolen animals to collect the droppings of the animal or sand from its tracks,

knock his charm against them and say: "No one shall eat my goats, or sheep, or cows; if he eats them he shall die." The thief will fall ill, his nose will bleed, he will pass blood and die unless he confesses and asks for the magic to be lifted.

Still another method is that used against a suspected thief. One scratches sand from his footprints and throws it into the fire; if he is guilty his feet will swell and he will die a painful death, even after a number of years.

A person suspected of the theft of food, honey, beer, flour, or a fowl, is put to the test with cow's urine heated in a pot until it boils; a needle is dropped into it and the suspect, who has been washed with water, must lift the needle with the fingers out of the pot. If he is guilty the boiling fluid will spill over and scald his arms and body (Nadel 1947: 155-156).

D. CLAN MAGIC

Protective clan magic has been found among the Nuba tribes. The following is a list of many of the magic powers possessed by the individual clans:

1. Urtora: Master of the hill, invested with the most powerful magic, and the more specific powers claimed by the other clans are derived from this spirit.
2. Urshuli: His sphere is with grain cultivation and with houses.
3. Urotishe: This is concerned with cattle and milk.

4. Urkellam: Involved with success in warfare and with oaths sworn on spears or other iron weapons.
5. Urshaman: Concerned with the hunting of giraffe.
6. Urshumal (or Urshumat): Concerned with the hunting of elephants and leopards.
7. Urmande: Concerned with cultivation.
8. Urtorndo: Concerned with honey and the fertility of women.
9. Urshiru: Concerned with water and the digging of wells.
10. Urwartne: No special magic.
11. Uronkit: Concerned with funeral rites and the spirits of the dead.
12. Urkonit: Concerned with cultivation of beans, gourds, and mellons.

When one is in need of spiritual help he may apply to each of these spirits. While these magic powers are possessed by the individual clans, yet individuals from any clan may appeal for help from any one or all of them.

The spirit is usually incarnated in a Great Kujur, or prophet. In the event there is no Great Kujur there can be found a number of small Kujurs of the clan who become occasionally possessed. In other cases, one may make an offering to the clan spirit through the gendi, the hereditary officiants of the cult. Sometimes the power of the spirit is controlled by the clan to such an extent that any member of the clan may supply the needed magic.

Magic powers vested in the clans emerge in two forms, on the one hand in fixed seasonal ceremonies of the tribe, and on

the other in acts of assistance to individuals and not bound up with the ritual or the seasonal calendar. Prosperity and well-being of the community are dependent upon communal rites and individual offerings.

There are three seasonal rites, the first, the 'leaves-of-beans' ritual, which sanctions the consummation of the first fruits of the season, maize and other early crops, and also safeguards the cattle and the abundance of milk; the second, called urmalke, 'ritual of the house' is a pre-harvest rite which secures the fertility of the land, the health of children, and blesses horses; the third, onor, is performed before the threshing begins, initiates the hunting season and insures the health of livestock.

In addition to tribal magic there is magic against locusts which is attributed to the spirit-mother Urne and her female kujurs. Urne's spirit-husband, Urbaga, is regarded as being responsible for drought. The spirit-mother Urne is appealed to for rain. There are other types of magic against illness which are so general in character that they are carried out by almost any kujur, great or small, representing any clan spirit (Nadel 1947: 421-423).

E. HOLY MEN AND PRIESTHOOD

The reth, or king, occupies the highest role among the Shilluk as a holy man. His office is much more a ritual one

than a political one. He is the incarnation of Nyikang. He is referred to as the high priest of the land, for he is the high priest of the tribal religion. He is called upon to make sacrifices for rain, to provide victory in war, to see to it that cattle are provided for the sacred herd of Nyikang. He is the temporal and spiritual head of the nation and the center of the national religion. The fact that he is regarded as the embodiment of the first king, gives him great influence among the tribes. He represents more than kingship. He is the intermediary between God and man; in fact, he represents a part of God, and is regarded with awe and reverence.

The reth is absolute and dispenses life and death for his people. His subjects must pay heavy taxes in cattle, dura, boats, skins for clothes, and in some cases human beings as well. All judicial cases must be brought before the king and the final decision is in his hands. Formerly there was an unwritten code providing certain penalties and fines. Cattle thieves were killed on the spot by the owner of the stolen property. If the thief escaped, but was found with the stolen article, the owner demanded its return. If the thief refused to give it up and the owner was unable to get it by force, the matter was reported to his chief. If he failed there, it was brought to the king who punished the man by taking his property and some girls from

the village for himself. In certain infractions of the law the culprit became the slave of the king and could not return to his home. These slaves were called tyen orok, men of crime, or adero. The king gave a wife to such a man who had become his slave. Their children were slaves at the royal court, known as adero. To the male descendants of such slaves the king gave wives, from among the female offspring of the adero class. If the king lacked enough girls in the adero class to supply all the young men with wives, he bought free girls for the purpose. The children of these couples became slaves. There were cases in which the criminal became the slave of the chief. Such an enslaved criminal was also known as adero. Homicide cases were tried by a court of chiefs and the king. If the man was condemned he was disgraced before the people. He was led about the village with a cow-rope around his neck, and then put to death by hanging. If a man were executed on account of a crime, his entire family and everything he owned became the property of the king (Westermann 1912: 47-48).

Priests are bang reth (servants of the king), wives of former kings, descendants of personal attendants of the king, and people possessed with the spirit of Nyikang, and others who in one way or another have become retainers dependent upon the house of the king. These make up the guardians and priests of the shrines of Nyikang, and the shrines and graves of the former

Shilluk kings. Offerings are made at the shrines and graves as part of the religious cult of Nyikang, the main cult of the Shilluk. Offerings are also made to the ancestors (Fordell 1955: 141).

Among the Shilluk the foremost priest is the baret of the male sex. He functions in the great solemn sacrifices. The king is the first baret. Baret includes both sexes just as the ajwago, or magician, includes both sexes. The one can be the baret or the ajwago. Baret, by their nature, are wives of the king, who, removed by the king of old, have been assigned to individual temples. Kings' daughters, nyaret, are never baret. All old Shilluk men and women who have frequent epileptic ailments can be called baret. Baret use no schools; it is enough that the state of dreaming and possession by which the illness is characterized has been elucidated by Nyikang.

He has, in general with the ajwago, a set of white and green pearls on the right foot. His characteristic mark is a ring of ostrich feathers around the neck which he wears proudly as a mark of his office. The baret despises many amulets as they always trail down upon the ajwago. The female baret confine themselves to the family sacrifice; with great functions they never appear as sacrificers. Young hysterical women never become baret. The baret have nothing to do with medicine. The business of the female baret is that of keeping clean the temple of Nyikang.

and the kings. They are presented with cows, by the kings, whose milk serves them as nourishment. Usually each temple has more than one baret. Sacrifices are offered continually before the temples. To these temples pilgrims often go with white and black lambs in time of need. The office of baret is not hereditary.

The Shilluk have no figure of ancestors; only one figure, the Nyikang-Statue, has been carved roughly from simple ambatch. It is made according to the importance of the king of the moment and is a special outer mark of distinction. The Shilluk feared to excite their ancestors to wrath through carvings of images or statues. They have an endless number of songs with which they extol the ancestor-cult (Hofmayer 1925: 231-232).

As Nyikang's successor, the king is the high priest of the land and bears as such the tongue-shaped spear brought out at the head of his kingly army, while a baret or shaykh must do that only on the occasion of a sacrifice. Only the king has the power to permit or refuse a sacrifice. According to Shilluk belief the refusal of a sacrifice means rainlessness as a consequence. Misfortune and famine then come in the land whose destiny lies in the hands also of the king.

The most significant sacrifices are offered by the king on two important occasions, namely rain and war. The rain fails

to appear for a long time so there follows a crop failure and a fearful famine is the consequence. The king ostensibly has the power to supply the desired rain for the land. The sacrifice as a request for abundant rain is one of the most important acts of the administration of the king. He offers the sacrifice in Fashoda (the royal residence) and gives permission that it may occur again in the entire land. After repeating the sacrifice several times without success there follows the offering of a people, which is consecrated as a sacrifice to the Advocate of the god-head on earth, Nyikang (Hofmayr 1925: 152-153).

In a word, the king of the Shilluk is regarded as divine or semi-divine and holds spiritual and temporal authority. He settles disputes, is responsible for fertility in man, crops, and cattle, gives success in war, hunting, and fishing. There are other holy persons of less importance regarded as holy by the Shilluk.

In the category of holy men among the Nuer are the wut ghok, or cattle expert, the kuaar thoi, water expert, the kuaar yiika, concerned with fecundity of women, the kuaar juath, whose area is that of dealing with epidemic diseases.

The kuaar muon, or kuaar twac, is the Leopard-Skin Chief or Land Chief. As kuaar muon he has sacred association with mun, the earth. He is also called kuaar twac because he wears a leopard skin (twac) over his shoulders. His functions have

to do with the welfare of crops, rain-making, and the regulation of the weather, settlement of feuds, and with cleansing parties to incestuous union. He also protects people against the ghosts of slain enemies.

The prophet or guk, also referred to as cok kwoth, is highly regarded in Nuer society because he is believed to possess kwoth, and is possessed by one of the sky spirits. The prophet is important in Nuer life in foretelling cattle epidemics and other events, as well as leading expeditions or raids against the Dinka.

The wut ghok, or cattle expert, has direction over the fecundity of cattle, the production of milk, and the obviating of cattle diseases. He is responsible for opening and closing the initiation periods for the Age-sets. He is to perform the ritual of warfare, and the fecundity rites for women.

Kuaar yiika, the badge of his office is the yiik, chief of the mats. He is the mediator who is called upon in case of disputes about the mode of death or the number of cattle still due (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 168-177).

Kuaar thoi, the water expert, whose office is hereditary is called upon to bless raiding parties and to perform rituals to preclude the enemy from giving poisoned water to his blessed raiders. He also blesses the water that there might be a great productivity of fish and that fishermen might be successful in

catching them. He carries out rites also against crocodiles, and is often called kuaar nyang (crocodile expert). He assists when cattle are fording a river to prevent crocodiles from attacking them.

Kuaar juath (an hereditary office), marked by a cow-skin which he beats with a stick, has as his principal function that of preventing the spread of disease among humans.

The gwan tang (spear-shaft expert) is concerned with the success of raiding parties and the performance of rites to avoid spear wounds to the warriors.

All of these holy men or experts are known as possessors of twac, emphasizing their right to wear a particular skin as a badge of their office. Those holy men who do not wear this badge of distinction are called dwek.

The ji kuthni, or sky spirits, and the ji twac, comparable to the kuaar kwac, but of less importance, have for their function performances in connection with all the people and with phenomena or events which affect the whole tribe or community.

There is a large number of different categories of spirit owners: owners of sky-spirits (kuth nial), owners of spirits of the wind (kuth dange), owners of earth-spirits (kuth piny), and "talking medicines".

Totemic experts among the Nuer have ritual connections with lions, crocodiles, and other dangerous animals. They are

able to influence the behavior of animals for the good of the community. A totemic expert possesses the spirit of his totem.

The duty of the gwan muot, a war specialist, is to shake spears in the face of the enemy and to make prayers against them. The gwan muot is one who possesses the spear.

The Gwan Buthni, an official who performs certain ritual services for the family members at marriages and funerals, also severs kinship bonds between two distantly related people when a marriage is arranged.

Prophets, as possessors of sky spirits or gods, are regarded with great reverence by the Nuer. Prophets have a greater influence among the Nuer than any ritual specialist in the entire society. Their influence is beyond that of tribal boundaries, and is felt and respected in a number of tribes (Howell 1954: 211-216).

The priests of the Dinka are regarded as being descendants of Deng--Son of God, who is the intermediary between man and the Universal Spirit. Deng stands for the firmament, the stars, the rain, the world in general. A madman or a magician has Deng. Priests are the representatives of Deng and inheritors of the spirit of Deng. Their work is to carry out the fixed ritual of Deng in order that God may be pleased and give health and prosperity to the tribe.

Religious ceremonies are performed for the harvest festival with dances and sacrifices of bulls and goats in the

month of October (Kon). Rain-making ceremonies are performed in April (Alabor) and May (Akoldit).

In addition to these priests or representatives of Deng, who may be either men or women, there are tribal chiefs who are specialized functionaries who deal with specific matters and whose duty it is to perform certain rituals in connection with these things.

Baing Thiop, the land chief, is the most important of these chiefs. His function is to put the first spear in the bull that is sacrificed at the settlement of a blood feud.

There are six types of tribal chiefs: (1) Baing Thiop, land and leopard chief, whose function it is to see that proper means are used to have good rains by performing the traditional ritual; (2) Baing Weng, chief of the cattle, who has charge of the welfare of cattle and decides when they should move from one grazing place to another; (3) Baing Tong, war chief; (4) Baing Lei, chief of the hunt; (5) Baing Jwei, medicine man, who cures many common ills, and gives advice on infantile diseases and sterility; (6) Din Yuwer, protector of fishing.

Behind all the priests or chiefs of Deng is the customary tradition on which they depend for their influence among the people. The functions of the priesthood and tribal chiefs are interdependent and rest on the religion of Deng (Sudan Notes and Records 1935: 195-198).

The spiritual chief of the Dinka Gol (clan) is the Bang a Bith, chief of the sacred spear. The appointment is usually hereditary, but is never held by a young man.

The Bang Bith leads his Gol in war and in the chase. He has power to drive off dangerous lions. He accomplishes this by removing the soil on which a spoor, or track of an animal, is shown and placing it in the forest a day's march away. The next night the lion will be found where its spoor has been thrown. The Bang Bith has charge of peace ceremonies and officiates at the sacrifice of the Yat, or totem bull. He has power to bring rain, cure sickness, and cause harm to enemies. These acts are all the result of prayers by the Bang a Bith to Nyalich, the Supreme Being, the Yat or Wa Dit (my big father).

The Bang Deng is a spiritual leader of less importance than the Bang a Bith. He blesses the seed grain of his Gol before sowing.

The Bang Raich is a spiritual leader of minor importance whose duty it is to make sacrifices to the pools before they can be fished. In the event the Yat of the Gol is the river, the Bang a Bith performs this ceremony (Sudan Notes and Records 1934: 247-248).

A headman of a village among the Annuak (Kuairi) might well be regarded as a holy man, for the people pay him ceremonial respect and have for him great reverence. He holds in his possession the village drums, special strings of beads, and certain sacred

spears. Special salutations and special words are used only with reference to headmen, which would indicate that they hold places of importance in the life of the people. The villagers hoe the cultivations for the headman, and make gifts of game and fish. When compensation is received for homicide, the headman takes a cow or its equivalent because the man was killed on his land.

A headman must always hold the respect of the community, for he could be removed from office and from the village by an agen, a village revolution. To be a headman one must be a male member of a dominant lineage of the village, and his father must have been a headman before him. The headman is a ritual and not an administrative figure. He decides in matters of dispute only if he is called upon. His authority is derived from the confidence which is placed in him and from the values which center around his office. He is usually safe in holding his office provided he is a member of the tung dwong, the dominant lineage of the village. Expelled headmen go generally to the village of their maternal relatives, and stay there with the hope that they may be recalled (Butt 1952: 71-72).

Among the Nuba, the Koalib occupying the Koalib Hills in Southern Kordofan call their holy man bayel. To the north of the Koalib Hills in Southern Kordofan, the Nyima, another Nuba group, calls their holy man by the name of kuni, and the Dilling group,

directly east of the Nyima group, calls its holy man Uro, and its medium Kujur. Kujur has become widespread and this term is now used by most of the tribes. The kujur, being spirit possessed, "talks in tongues" motivated, of course, by the spirit, predicts the future, cures diseases, divines events hidden from human knowledge, like secret crimes committed by unknown persons. The kujur is regarded with awe and reverence. One must enter his presence with barehead, must bow and place hands on his knees or legs; the kujur then touches the arms or head of the visitor and blesses him.

Upon the inauguration of the kujur by the whole community he is given the insignia of spirit priestship, a small ostrich feather, rings and bangles, and the carved stool on which to sit during his seances. He is known as a Great Kujur or koton kujur, Priest of the Stool. He carries out certain ritual rules, lives on a hill with his family. He must not walk down to the village or sit in the house of other people, and he must carry out strictly certain food taboos of the tribe.

Kujurs have no power over rain. This is left to the rain-maker, called neleny by the Koalib and Shirra by the Ngima. The office of rain-maker stands on a higher plane than that of spirit possession. The office is regarded as being pre-ordained and fulfills itself in the priestship of annual rites, and not occasional acts of magical help. This is a social control which gives focus for the cohesion of the tribe.

In Dilling, the king is a rain-maker. While he can never be a kujur, he shares certain characteristics of the spirit priest. He has their insignia of office, bangles, rings, and sacred stool, must carry out their voidances and their rites of consecration. The kingship is sacred and the people regard their king as sacred.

Chiefs called kweleny, more of tribal ambassadors than military leaders, could originally treat with the enemy and arrange ransom for captives and conclude alliances or pacts of friendship. These chiefs also have rain-making powers. The chief is comparable to the omda, head of a village, except that so far as we know, the omda has, and had, no rain-making powers (Nadel 1947: 440-447).

Among the Acholi there are several officials who are comparable to the holy men among the Nuer and Dinka. Won ngon is the father or owner of the land. He is also referred to as won tim, owner of the bush. His office is hereditary and his functions are to burn the grass before hunting, for blessing the crops, and for performing rites in connection with land and crops. The wan gang is the father of the village, really the head man who has charge of a village with the assistance of the elders. The otega is the war leader, chosen by the warriors of the village but cannot wage war without the authority of the rwot, the head of a kingdom who has a higher status of authority as a war leader than the otega. The won kot is the rain chief.

This function is exercised by the rwot and also by the won neon as well (Butt 1952: 84).

F. ORGANIZED CEREMONIES

I. Death Ceremonies: Of all the ceremonies of religion, those which concern death and burial have been retained more permanently and unchangeably than all others. A Shilluk is closely related to the dead. So all relatives, witches, and medicine men gather themselves together around the dead. Without one hand to touch for the alleviation of sickness, all sit there and are employed only with the preparation for death as their own individual business. For a time the dying is without consciousness or suffers great pains so the relatives help him to a quicker death. The women begin to scream when the dying is pronounced dead; the face is covered with a cloth and a grave is dug. A sacrifice, a black-white hen without head, is placed under the head of the dead. No visitor beholds anymore the face of the dead.

The Shilluk bury their dead and do not set them out as food for the hyena or throw them in the river as certain central African tribes assert that this is the custom of the Nandi and the Massai. The position of the grave of the Shilluk dead lies inside the village circle. Each family burys its dead before the hut, the head turned toward the dwelling and the body toward the village square. While the Acholi put their relatives in

the grave in a squatting posture, imitating the embryo; the Shilluk place their dead flat on the ground. The great of the land, namely, kings, kwaret, descendants of kings and grand shaykhs are buried on stands or frames in individual huts. Only old men, mostly relatives, work on the grave. Twins and men whose wives are pregnant must not take part in it. The closest male relatives give no assistance. Before the dead is placed in the grave he is washed. If the dead is a young man who has not danced or a young woman, each is buried in full dance attire. Under great screams of united female mourning, old female relatives carry the dead to the grave. Men and young men weep aside in a stall. They must not partake of wine for that would be unmanly. A skin is spread upon the floor of the grave upon which the dead is placed with the face covered with a par, thatched straw. Under the head of the remains the dead hen or a piece of skin is placed. Over the remains, wrapped in a piece of cloth, a skin is spread in order to separate the body from the earth. Young women take leave from their husbands and throw backwards, with crossed hands, the shoes in the grave. After this, under great lamentations the grave is closed with soil. All show interest in the funeral whether near or far then they go to the river in order to purify themselves. On the way back from the sad event, they pluck branches of the Sodom's apple bush in order to be proof against all revengeful acts of

the dead. The dwelling house of the dead remains vacant three or four days except to be purified. The closest relatives spend these days in mourning. After the first four days the house becomes purified and must again be inhabited.

Toward evening of the burial day the community arranges for a farewell greeting at the grave of the male dead with full armour and shields. Three days throughout, early morning and evening, two women with bells, shields and spears, objects of the dead, which remain on the grave these three days, make a round about the entire community to publish with bells and weeping the death of a member. Dances and festivities are prohibited during this time. On the third or fourth day the crowd of mourners again assembles to kwojo (the sprinkling of sand on the grave). All women raise up again with weeping and mournful screams. The men circle around the grave under the muffled beat of the drums and sing serious mournful songs.

After this ceremony the house in which the dead has died is purified. Sweepings, pillows, nets of sacrificial animals, the walking stick of the dead, and other small useful objects are thrown on the village road. This rubbish must not be emptied in the field because the seed would suffer by it. After this to the next ywok (funeral dance) the relatives pass the time in mourning. They shear the hair, put away all ornaments of pearls, carry a cow's rope around the neck, and refrain from all dances and festivals. The funeral-dance is arranged according to convenience.

Sometimes only a month is allowed after the death, many times a year, or with kings, even many years from the death to the especially great funeral-dance. The carrying out of the custom depends upon the availability of the necessary oxen to be slaughtered for the funeral-dance.

All utensils of the dead, as shields, spears, sticks, skins, cooking vessels, are brought around during the dance, which is always in a circle. An excavation is made on the side of the grave or hut and when the three hour dance ends all of the objects are thrown, during the noise and lamentations, into the excavation. A sheep, by means of a piece of club-shaped wood, (olalo) is placed on the grave, and the blood penetrates as a sacrifice in the grave to the dead.

Over the rubbish, which has become deep in the proximity of the grave excavation, the Shilluk place the most powerful horns of the slaughtered oxen with the mournful ceremony. The number of slaughtered oxen in each solemn feast is in accordance with the position and wealth of the dead. The number varies from two to forty, which are actually killed in the case of kings' sons and great shaykhs. The entire meat is divided among the mourners.

After this ceremony one places no more gifts on the grave but brings a gift when in need of a favor. The grave disappears with the first rain and is regarded no more in connection with a usual burial place. Over a still discernible grave no

male foot must step and each neglect has set out the vengeance of the dead (Hofmayr 1925: 299-303).

II. Installation Rites: Among the Dinka of the northern district of the upper Nile Province there is performed a number of ceremonies, the most important of which are: the installation of the Beny Rem, the spiritual head of the tribe, comparable to the reth among the Shilluk, the killing of the Beny Rem, the peace ceremony, the river ceremony, and the health ceremony.

In the matter of the installation of the Beny Rem, a mendyor or elder is chosen because of his interest in the people or other special virtues. A big feast is held and subsequently a religious ceremony by all of the elders, both kic, a religious man with more or less magical functions, and mendyor, a religious elder, characterized more by priestly than magical functions.

Two bulls, one slaughtered by the elders on the evening before installation, and the second one by the Beny Rem elect on the day itself. Both bulls are eaten by the elders and the bones are buried in a place which thereafter shall be the burial place of the bones of all sacrifices and is the yik de yat (mound).

The fire used for roasting the meat is taken to the Beny Rem's house and is known as his fire. This fire is sacred and is never permitted to be extinguished until the day of his death when all fires in the section must be extinguished with it.

The kic elders have the Beny Rem elect to sit on an ambatch bed on the ground, wash his hands and arms with water. Then mendyor and kic elders place two or more strings of ostrich-egg beads around his neck, crown him with a ring made from the mane of a roan antelope (gol) and cover his body with butter from a sacred cow. He sits on the hide of a bull sacrificed by the elders. Those who previously held some claim to the office cut off the portion of one of the legs of the hide until the hide is turned into an oval shape. This shows that they have renounced their rights and they thus swear allegiance to the new Beny Rem. Strips are cut from the four legs of the other hide with which they tie a special kind of grass, mon, and make a stand (kol yat). With the rest of the hide a long rope is made to which every member ties or pins an amulet, beads, rings, etc. The elders turning the rope into a coil, place it on the stand, and it is given to the Beny Rem (ywen yat). His ancestor's spear (tong yat) is presented to the Beny Rem and the warriors parade and march before him. He sprinkles the people with water and the blood of a sacrificed bull. Then a celebration takes place with a large dance for several days. This ended, the Beny Rem, accompanied by a few elders, goes from village to village with two small pieces of wood, each a foot long, hanging from his neck. These pieces of wood are soaked in butter from the sacred cow.

III. Miscellaneous Rituals: An annual ceremony is made by the Dinka on moving from their villages down to their summer grazing grounds. They make a sacrifice to the river. This ceremony is conducted by a class of kic Dinka or a mendyor. Everyone stands on the bank of the river, and a Beny Wir, river chief, brings a small sheep or goat and a gourd with butter from the sacred cow. All grown persons tie some kind of ornament, beads, rings, or bracelets around the neck of the sheep and the Beny Wir prays to the river and all the people raise their arms to heaven. Following this, small children are carried on the shoulders of the people and the Beny Wir takes the sheep and drowns it, or causes it to disappear. He throws the butter from the gourd to the water and all the people wade up to their waists and drink. Before that ceremony the river was taboo.

In the health ceremony when some illness has befallen the people a Beny Rem or mendyor or kic witch doctor (kic tyet) conducts a ceremony to drive the disease away or to give the people immunity from it. A small animal is brought for sacrifice and all the people gather before the tula yat (a bunch of several small axes kept outside the house) of the Beny Rem who holds in his hand a new gourd in which all the grown up people spit. Passing the gourd over the heads of all small children who are carried by their mothers, he brings another gourd containing butter from a sacred cow and takes a little of it and with his fingers touches

the chest of everyone. After that both gourds are thrown into the river (Sudan Notes and Records 1948: 50-54).

IV. Shamanistic Rites: In the Nuba mountains religious life is characterized by a shamanistic cult. The shaman is called by different names by different tribes. He is called kuni by the Nyimang, kujur by the Dilling, tamsala by the Miri, and bayel or bel by the Koalib. The terms bayel and bel are applicable alike both to the spirit and its possessor. The bayel spirits are not conceived of as possessing any semblance of humans and yet they are credited with human attributes. Every bayel priest keeps a gourd of beer from which the spirit is supposed to drink. Bayel spirits which have not inhabited human beings are thought of as living in caves, crags, or hills, where they wander at night flickering a mysterious light.

When one is possessed and thereby becomes a shaman a female relative keeps his company day and night, gives him water and food, and helps him to wash and dress. His family prepares beer and collects a number of goats for the ceremony, while people from the village build a new hut for him, and his ritual assistants (kortan) carve out of a tree a sacred three legged stool (togreny) on which the bayel priest must sit.

Relatives of the new shaman and all the people of the village take part in the ceremony. A fully initiated bayel priest is invited to direct the ceremonial. A goat is speared in front of the hut where the novice is sitting in the presence of his

shaman guests along with some old men and women. The novice steps with his right foot across the animal with his arms being held up by other bayel priests, swings forward and backward, rests first on one foot and then on the other four times; the fifth time he steps across the body. Another goat is brought.

The goat is led in a circle around the initiate, dragged forward and backward between his legs, lifted up, with its muzzle rubbing across the face and body of the initiate. Each movement is repeated five times. A man in the ring of participants in the ceremony says, "God give that you should never be in need. You shall not have to look for things (which you need) outside, but you shall find them in your house. There shall be grain and goats (i.e. wealth), and children and everything." The shaman guest takes a chair, lifts it and throws it in different directions five times and adds a short prayer, "Bayel (here meaning God) give us all health." He gives the spear to one of the ritual assistants who pierces the goat and kills it. A woman begins to sing. The shaman takes the twig of a certain shrub, dips it into the wound and touches the initiate lightly on both temples, chest, and right leg. Afterwards the twig is stuck outside into the roof of the new hut. The body of the goat is placed in front of the threshold, and the new bayel priest facing the door, steps half way across the animal, swinging to and fro five times, the last time stumbling into the hut followed by the

other bayel priests, ritual assistants, men and women relatives of the initiate. Before sitting on the new stool the legs of the stool are sprinkled with the blood of the goat. A forked wooden post with a small gourd-bowl tied to its top, situated in the center of the hut, has a little beer poured into it as a first offering to the spirit. On the outside the people prepare the killed animals. The first goat is roasted over fire to be eaten later by the old men. From the second goat a strip of skin is taken out of which a magic bracelet (lortede) is made. This is tied to the right wrist of the new bayel priest. The entrails of the second goat are roasted and eaten by his companions in the hut. He eats only a little himself, his first food for the day. The rest of the meat is divided among the guests. The men drink beer, the women and girls sing and dance until at dusk the gathering disperses. The visiting shaman receives a gift of goats on his departure.

During the progress of the whole ceremony the bayel priest has intermittent "attacks" produced by the singing of the women. He yells, groans, trembles, and "talks in tongues". After the ceremony the manifestations of the spirit becomes less frequent and less violent (Sudan Notes and Records 1941: 85-91).

G. CONCLUSION

Organized ceremonial among the tribes of the Sudan is not to be regarded as a strange phenomenon. When we take into

account the place of religion in the life of the tribes of the Sudan, the high esteem and reverence in which their religious functionaries are held, their priests, their prophets, and magicians, it is not difficult to see the religious and magical power which is exerted over these people. Religion is the explanation for phenomena which otherwise would be unaccounted for. Religious sanction can always be found in almost every area of life for one to carry out in one form or another some type of ritual observance, in order to bring prosperity or well-being or to obviate misfortune. This is not only seen in the case of an individual or family but it goes beyond to that of the whole tribe or community where it becomes obligatory upon the entire group to participate in organized ceremonial for the good of the group in eliminating epidemics, ridding cattle of diseases, or supplying rain. This organized ceremonial among the tribes is a factor in the matter of cohesion of the tribal elements and has much to do with giving rigidity and stability to the mores of the tribe and as a deterrent to tribal disintegration. Organized ceremonial gives expression to tribal unity, and tribal solidarity. So the tribes, in their beliefs, their practices, and their organizations are enmeshed in a world of spirits which is the guiding force which motivates almost every act of their lives.

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CHAPTER IV

THE INFLUENCE OF ISLAM UPON THE NATIVE RELIGION

A. INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON NATIVE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

In the preceding pages we saw how Islam penetrated into the Sudan and came in contact with pagan elements. We have also seen a fairly representative cross section of the native religion of the Southern Sudan. We are now concerned with the influence of Islam upon the indigenous cultures of the Sudan and their adaptation to it. We saw how Islam spread in the Sudan by inter-marriage, conquest, trade, and the slave traffic.

When Islam came to the Sudan it had passed through centuries of development and had incorporated all kinds of animistic and magical elements and many of these elements were easily assimilable into the indigenous religious life of the natives. As a result of this acculturative process Islam in the Sudan is not divorced from animistic beliefs which vary in degree or detail from region to region, but for all intents and purposes are the same in kind.

The main types of religious life found in most parts of the Sudan are indicated in the masses, the feki (faqih) class, the conservative Muslim, and the Effendiyya.

The masses observe the five fundamental laws of Islam, faith in one God, prayer, fasting, alms giving, and pilgrimage.

principles
belief

They turn to ritual prayer as a religious duty but express their inner yearnings and find more satisfaction in dhikr exercises, i.e. ^xglorying of Allah with certain fixed phrases repeated in a ritual order either aloud or in the mind with peculiar breathing and physical movements. One could hardly regard them as being truly orthodox for their orthodoxy is just a matter of ^{merely} trite phrases. They are more under the spell of magic than of law and swayed more by religious ^secstasy than formal prayer. They have a superstitious reverence for their leaders, the fekis and shaykhs of the religious orders. Their religious concepts are predicated upon stories derived from the teaching of the orders about the lives of the prophets or saints. The baraka (the sacred), the unseen, the supernatural, and their appearances are very real to them. The spirit-world, harmful and helpful, is ever with them. The cult of the saints, living and dead, is their religion. They visit their tombs, pour out their desires before them and implore their help in time of need. In times of crises--disease, death, distress, calamity upon individuals, families, or even whole communities, they turn to the feki-exorcist to drive them out. Their social and family life from birth to death, with its festivals, while ^{dictates} apparently governed by the laws of Islam, is tied up with the underlying strata of animism or spirit-worship, and almost all practices connected with these are of pagan origin. These ideas and practices vary according to tribe or region for Islam accommodates

itself to the forms of religion which it encounters.

The religious leaders of the masses comprise the feki-class. These leaders hold a high place of distinction as individuals, or as families, as inheritors of the baraka of some famous ancestor. They are religious in the Islamic sense and are always connected with a dervish order. The Sudani turns to the feki in seeking relief from trouble or protection from unknown dangers and evil spirits. The feki is regarded as having supernatural power and is thought to be motivated or possessed by some spiritual agency. This gives him influence among the tribesmen who reverence him for his mystical power. The feki may live a life of religious intoxication or one of soberness. He may be an ascetic, living in a retreat subjecting himself to great austerities, or be influenced by the superficialities of the world. These things make no difference to the tribesmen, for saturated with mysticism, the feki represents the deeper aspects of religious life and is deeply revered.

The conservative Muslims are regarded as orthodox but relatively few assert their orthodoxy and are deeply concerned with the Quran and Traditions. They find pleasure in the mechanical formulas of theological scholasticism. They think that whatever conforms with the past is good. With adamant circumscribed outlook they divide mankind into kāfirin (unbelievers) and mu'minin (believers). They (find) delight in discussing the functions of the

nineteen guardians of hell (Quran 74: 30). They are opposed to the pseudo-mysticism of the dervish orders and the reverence of the masses for their fekis or shaykhs, but they themselves are not uninfluenced by Sufism. Nicholson succinctly describes Sufism as, "self-abandonment, rigorous self-mortification, fervid piety, and quietism carried to the verge of apathy" (Nicholson 1953: 231). The conservative Muslim usually belongs to the middle class, may hold a religious post, be a teacher in a khalwa (a retreat), or a shopkeeper.

The Effendiyya are those who have received a western education. In the main they are loyal Muslims, even though they may be opposed to some aspects of Islam. They may show a great deal of interest in rationalized Islam, yet they do not hesitate to visit a feki for assistance in some crisis. While decrying the superstitions of the masses, they wear their amulets. They attend Friday prayers in order to maintain their respectability and social status but at the same time they are not in sympathy with the tenets of Islam as subscribed to by their fathers (Trimingham 1949: 110-112).

The influence of the Effendiyya is not to be discounted, but self-interest obviates their desire to help the masses and their revolt against religion is very little more than superficial. The contact of the Effendi with western education and ideas is a factor in his change of attitude toward religion, for while in

his new environment in the West he found less emphasis upon religion than in his native land. Upon his return to his homeland the impact of the West, in this respect, was still with him.

Islam was carried into pagan Africa by the Hamitic peoples of Africa. It came to negroid peoples through Hamitic conquerors or merchants, not as a religion, but as the civilization of aristocratic African peoples who, without race discrimination, were able to intermarry with them and live a common social life with them. African Islam is not the same as Islam in Asia where it was a barbaric religion superimposed upon an ancient civilization and absorbed into it, Muslim saints taking the place of other gods. This is true in Africa only in the North. It is found in the Sudan in Donqola where the saints' tombs are often on ancient Nubian or Christian sites. (This, however, is different in pagan Africa.) Islam came to pagan Africa not as a religion but as a cultural system which imposed itself on African cultures, and as a result there was a gradual transference and fusion of culture, bringing about a new unit. The new culture, Islam, was assimilated and became indigenous. The character of African Islam is such that its acceptance causes little internal disturbance of the social life, and customs of the native religion, for Islam takes over the central features of the native elements of paganism by syncretism. The pagan customs are kept while the spirit of the custom is lost (Trimingham 1949: 249).

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Arabic element entered the country from two sides. "In the first place the nomads came in from the direction of Dongola and soon obtained the predominance in the plains north of the latitude of Kaga. Here at the present day the so-called Nuba, whose type ranges from the negroid to the debased Arab, and a smattering of Danagla, hold the largest hills.....In the second place, in the sixteenth century the allied forces of Fung and Arab, having taken Soba and Kerri from the Anag or Nuba and founded the kingdom, began to push northwards and westwards. By the middle of the following century they had begun definitely to assert themselves in central Kordofan" (MacMichael 1922: 34).

East of Dilling and northwest of Delami, with the Koalib tribes in the South, there are hill tribes of Kadero which inhabit the Nuba mountains of Kordofan. Part of the population of Kadero was taken to Omdurman, Islamized and then returned to Kadero after the Battle of Omdurman in 1898. For more than a half century these hill tribes have been influenced by Islam and yet Islam has not become strong enough to wipe out the native religious antecedents of Islam. Even before the Battle of Omdurman, there must have been some contact with the Baqqara who were Islamized almost one hundred years prior to the Battle of Omdurman, occupied the plains and villages, and pushed the Nuba into the hills.

The Kadero are regarded as observing "the minimum of Islamic observances and full retention of tribal sanctions" (Trimingham 1949: 246)

This syncretism is corroborated by Nadel who says of the Kadero: "There are three seasonal ceremonies: (1) Keral or koral (known to the Arabs as sibr el khail, ceremony of horses), which marks the beginning of the New Year and falls in October-November, preceding the main harvest. (2) Okodu (leaves of beans), which revolves round the consecration of the first-fruits of the year; it is performed in the middle of the rains. (3) Noojor (sibr el gidad, ceremony of guinea fowls), which precedes the new farming season. The three ceremonies have closely similar aims: they ensure rains and fertility, the regeneration of the land, and the health of man and beast" (Sudan Notes and Records 1942: 47).

Here we have Nuba tribes who, for all intents and purposes, are Muslims in belief but have left out none of their tribal sanctions in their native religion. One would assume that these tribes carrying out all their tribal sanctions are entirely void of Islamic influence but this is not the case. Islam, while placing emphasis upon the externalities of its own tenets, does not regard a tribe as being outside of its fold once the tribe has accepted its tenets, even though the tribe may continue to carry out its own native religious sanctions. It must also be taken into account that the influence of Islam on the different tribes, with different backgrounds is not something which is the same everywhere, but different in order to meet and influence the varying groups with which it comes in contact. This is not weakness, but evidence of the adaptability of Islam to adjust itself to the changing aspects of its

new religious environment and to incorporate many foreign elements into its own religious system.

This dual element which characterizes the Kadero cannot always last for the stronger culture will gain ground over a weaker culture and as tribal sanctions weaken Islam will become stronger, and the native religious antecedents will be swallowed up entirely by Islam or there will be a new product by the syncretism of the two cultures.

The towns of Dilling, Kaduqli, Talodi, Dalami, Rashad including their colonies of non-Nuba are Muslim, and the hills around these towns are Islamized or semi-Islamized. In these places Islam has re-set and re-orientated the religious elements it met with and while many of them still linger, tribal sanctions have lost their hold and there is a purer Islam than can be found among the tribes of Kadero.

Religious orders have had effective influence on native religious beliefs especially in the case of permanent contact in urban centers where they usually give a religious club to natives. Four such orders have been found at Dilling among the Nuba. These orders are the Mirghaniyya, Ismā'iliyya, Qādiriyya, and the Tijāniyya. They are, along with many other religious orders, sects of Islam.

The Mirghaniyya was established in the Sudan by Muhammad Uthman al-Mirghani (1793-1853), a pupil of Sayyid Ahmad ibn Idris of Mecca. It is said of him: "In 1232 (A. D. 1817), the most learned and

pious Sherif, the noble Sayyid Muhammad Uthman al Mirghani al Mekki, visited Sennar and met its rulers and called upon all men to follow his tariqa; but only a few people did so, and the rulers paid no heed to him but wished to test him by examination; so they brought forward the feki Ibrahim and Baqadi, one of the most brilliant of the ulama, to examine him. And the feki Ibrahim arrived at Sennar with a racking headache and the pain increased until he died--and this before he had ever met the sherif. So the sherif left Sennar, and at that time his age was twenty-five years" (MacMichael 1922: 383-4).

Muhammad Uthman was sent to the eastern Sudan by Ahmad ibn Idris to spread his teachings. Sailing to Sawakin or Sawkin, and finding the land route dangerous there because of internal troubles, he went on the Red Sea to Kosair, then ascended the Nile to Aswan. From Aswan he went to Donqola where he crossed the desert to Kordofan, working without too much success among the native Nuba and winning the Muslims over to the tariqa of Ahmad ibn Idris. From Kordofan he went to Sennar.

While he did not have too much success as a propagandizing agent for his cause, however, like many Muslim emissaries, he created a close tie with the Sudan by marrying a Donqolawiyya in Kordofan, by whom he had a son Al-Hasan, which was a means of binding his African adherents. In addition to Al-Hasan, he had another son, Muhammad Sirr-al-Khatim.

Returning to the Hijaz, he continued his devotion to Ahmad ibn Idris, going so far as to follow his leader into exile in Sabya, where Ahmad died in 1837.

Muhammad Uthman, after contending with Muhammad ibn Ali as-Sanusi, in his own right established a central Zawiya, (literally the "corners" in the mosque where the disciples of a master gathered or the adherents of a doctrine) at Dair Khaizaran, with branches at Madina, Jidda, and At-Ta'if. In this central Zawiya Muhammad Uthman developed the theory of the peculiar hereditary sanctity of his family. He sent his sons as emissaries to propagandize other regions with his theory. Muhammad Sirr al-Khatim went to ^{the} Yaman and the Hadramawt, while Al-Hasan went to Sawakin where he won the Beja tribes of the Bani Amir. He went to Sennar, Kordofan and north Donqola endeavoring to set up Zawiyas. He made but little progress in the central regions, but was successful in northern Kordofan, Donqola and Nubia.

Because of Uthman's success the Ulama, learned ones, caused him to go into retirement at At-Ta'if where in 1853 he died. With his order well established in western and southern Arabia and the northern Sudan, his son, Muhammad Sirr al-Khatim, became shaykh at-tariqa. Al-Hassan was a regional leader in the Sudan, settled at Kassala, and founded the township of Khatmiyya after which the order of Mirghaniyya is sometimes called and it has since remained as the center of the order.

The order is organized in regional spheres of influence and all heads of areas are regarded as possessing the peculiar baraka of the family. It is very strict on its insistence of the extreme sanctity of the family and refuses to allow any of its devotees or adherents to be a part of any other order or to participate in their ritual.

The direct derivatives of the founder have the title of Sirr al-Khatimi, "the secret of the seal". This makes them hereditary trustees of this mysterious power which is given to the family. They are thought of as semi-divine by their followers who place their possessions and themselves at their disposal.

The founder of the Ismā'iliyya was Ismail al-Wali (1793-1863) ibn Abd-Allah al-Kordofani of an original family in Donqola. While his father was trading in Kordofan Ismail was born there. He became a follower of Muhammad Uthman al-Mirghani when Uthman came to Kordofan, and later by permission of his shaykh formed his own sect of Islam which was known as Ismā'iliyya. He became distinguished for his generosity, learning, and composition of some forty-five books.

Although Ismā'iliyya is a derivative of Mirghaniyya it is a separate and distinct order with its influence stemming from Ismail al-Wali and his composition of rules and awrad (special prayers). Its influence is mainly in Kordofan.

The Mulid (recitation of the Prophet's birth story) is read, not before the dhikrs (involving sacred texts recited to

music) or esoteric teaching; but a week after the ṣalāt al-jāmiʿ, prayer at the mosque. The founder's ratib (compilation of prayers, texts, and exhortations) which has to be recited in a twice a week service in the hadra (presence) or (meeting for worship) is read first. The dhikr is sung for about two hours during a hadra. The noba (drum) is used at the dhikr which is not the case with the Mirghaniyya sect where it is not used. It may be said that the Ismāʿīliyya order is the only Islamic order that is indigenous to the Sudan.

The Qādiriyya order, founded by Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (Died 1166 A. D.) had a madrassa and a ribāt (an institution similar to the zawiya) at Baghdad. The teaching and ecstatic practice embody the foundation of the rules of the order. Abd al-Qadir, regarded by extremists as semi-divine and by others as a great saint, spread his system to Syria, Egypt and Yemen, and throughout the whole Islamic world. This order has more nominal adherents than any other in the Sudan. It is strongest in the Jezira, where the tribes with an hereditary Khalifate live, but it is found all over the Sudan.

The camel nomads, Ammar'ar, and many Beja sections, claim Abd al-Qadir as their patron saint though they know little or probably nothing about the cult. Those in the north ask for his protection before going on a journey or at a crisis of life, at a bayen (shrine) dedicated to him near the rock Abu Sir at Wadi Halfa (Trimingham 1949: 217-236).

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The Tijāniyya order is one of the most active of African orders and has been of the chief means of spreading Islam in Africa. It was founded by Abu'l 'Abbas Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-Mukhtar b. Salim al-Tijāni (1150-1230) (1737-1815). The members of the order are called ahhab (friends) and are strictly prohibited to join any other tariqa. Their dhikr consists, as is customary, in the repetition (usually a hundred times) of certain formulas at particular times of the day. The most important doctrine is that of submission to the established government (Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam 1953: 594).

The Tijāniyya and Qādiriyya have been broken up into a number of sub-divisions which, in some cases, constitute independent orders or separate sects. Membership in an order may consist merely in the repeating of the dhikr without knowing its source or the purposes of the order. In some areas the religious orders have ^{assumed} taken on the character of religious brotherhoods which have taken the place of the previous totem unions. Because these two orders carry on the practice of mysticism in many of their associations they have gained great importance. The orders thus in many aspects take the place of the former pagan societies and the features of pagan mysticism survive and flourish in them. It is sometimes difficult to see the difference between Muslims and pagans. For magic is the religion of ordinary life for both Muslims and pagans. The benedictions and pilgrimages to the graves of saints, which

find great favor among the Muslims of the Sudan, as well as the use of charms are but means of obtaining spiritual power (The International Review of Missions 1912: 652-653).

All of these sects have made their contribution toward the assimilation of the native African religion or culture to that of Islam. While their methods have been different in some respects, their objectives have been similar. In this connection the following observation has been made: "Up to the middle of the nineteenth century most of the schools of the Sudan were founded and conducted by teachers trained under the auspices of the Qadiriyyah and their organization provided for a regular and continuous system of propaganda among the heathen tribes. The missionary work of this order has been entirely of a peaceful character, and has relied wholly on personal example and precept, on the influence of the teacher over his pupils, and on the spread of education. In this way the Qadiyyah missionaries of the Sudan have shown themselves true to the principles of their founder and the universal tradition of the order. For the guiding principles that governed the life of Abdul Qadir were love of his neighbour and toleration.....The Tijaniyah, belonging to an order founded in Algiers towards the end of the eighteenth century, have since their establishment in the Sudan about the middle of the nineteenth century, pursued the same missionary methods as the Qadiriyyah, and their numerous schools have contributed

largely to the propagation of the faith; but, unlike the former, they have not refrained from appealing to the sword to assist in the furtherance of their scheme of conversion, and unfortunately for a true estimate of the missionary work of Islam in Western Africa, the fame of their Jihads or religious wars has thrown into the shade the successes of the peaceful propagandist, though the labour of the latter have been more effectual towards the spread of Islam than the creation of petty short lived dynasties" (Ahmad No Date: 200-201).

These orders brought the Sudanese in close touch with the centers of Islam, for some scholars from the Hijaz went to the Sudan and men also went from the Sudan and studied in the Holy Cities of the Hijaz. This brought to the Sudan a type of Islam that was not far different from pagan Sudanese religions which was a factor in the assimilative process. This meant that a deteriorated type of Islam was brought to the Sudan by the Sudanese and Meccans alike, imbued with a mysticism and fanaticism which found impressionable soil in the Sudan. Along with this must be taken into account that these bearers of Islamic culture who were not Sudanese became Sudanese by intermarriage with the natives which gave to the Sudan an African brand of Islam which to this day has remained with it. These religious orders found many devotees among the already mystic and miracle-loving Sudanese, and thus the spread of Islam in the Sudan was facilitated.

The influence or infiltration of Islamic culture upon Nuba culture has been more continuous probably than any other section south of 12° latitude.

Nor far from Renk, running southward along the White Nile, is a small strip of territory which is a natural boundary between Islamized and pagan native tribes. Contact is made in this area between the Baqqara, a Muslim tribe, and the Dinka and the Shilluk, pagan tribes. The Salim tribe of the Baqqara, situated on the left bank of the White Nile from Jabalain north of Renk to Kaka south of Renk and on the right bank from Jabalain to near Renk, constantly comes in contact with the Dinka and the Shilluk. The members of the Salim tribe "mix largely with the Dinka and not being cultivators themselves rely upon them and the Shilluk for their grain supply" (MacMichael 1922: 276).

In this area there are also villages of Malikiyya. The Malikite school, an orthodox Islamic school founded by Malik ibn Anas, a Medina imam who died in 795, is dominant in the Maghrib (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco) and in central Africa. These devotees of the Malikiyya are derivatives of the Mahdiyya or mixed groups of detribalized Negroids who speak Arabic and are Muslims.

The Jabal Kukur of the Tabi Hills are in constant contact with Arab influence and are said to be using Arab names. The dwellers of the Tornasi group of hills, because of Dervish attacks, have suffered a breakdown of tribal mores. The Burun, to the south

of the Tornasi, bordering on the Nuer, pay allegiance to the suzerainty or authority of the Nasir or executive officer of Dar Funj, the district south of the Jezira between the White and Blue Niles. With their numbers reduced by the slave raiding on the east by the Abyssinians and on the west by the Baqqara, some of them are influenced by Islam, yet few of them can speak Arabic.

Political domination and slave raiding during the Egyptian and Mahdiyya periods facilitated the spread of Islam by scattering or absorbing detribalized elements. All slaves adopted Islam and in the event they were returned to their tribes they did not always give up their newly found or newly imposed-upon religion. Since stabilizing events have now taken place, other factors have entered to accelerate the process of Islamization of the Nuba. Among these factors are: safety, in that the Nuba feel free to leave their mountain fastnesses to cultivate crops; migration in seeking work, carrying many into a Muslim surroundings; roads over which camels of the Arabs pass, carrying on trade, and markets in the area; dependence of the Nuba upon the Arab as a conveyor of his produce, and the dependence of the Arab upon the Nuba for products. These are important factors, along with others, in the acculturative process.

Many Nuba towns, such as Dilling, Tolodi and others, with their segments of non-Nuba Hamitic-Negroid officials, traders, ginnery workers, and others, are largely Muslim. The hills belonging to

these towns are semi-Islamized. There are wandering Baqqara and some sedentary Arabicized Nuba in the plains. At the bases of some of the southern hills, Eliri and Talodi, there are detribalized Nuba. Other hills to the north (Dair, Taqali), and to the south (Miri), along with others, are Muslim or semi-Muslim, are changing their tribal customs, and are replacing them under the influence of Islam.

Islamization is not of the same degree in all these areas. Some tribes are entirely Islamized, others have the minimum of Islamic observances, and still others show almost no evidence of Islam except being partly clothed. The masses, however, of the Nuba are still uninfluenced.

The Sudanese tribes, the Dinka, Shilluk, and Nuer, are pastoral people and a large part of the area they inhabit is swampy and its accessibility is not easy for six months of the rainy season. These were factors which helped them to resist the dervishes and enabled them to keep intact their tribal cohesion. Many of the Dinka were forced to join Islam during the Mahdiyya period, but went back to their social system after Mahdism collapsed. While the Baqqara mix with the Dinka, they have little Islamic influence upon them.

The Shilluk have a king whom they regard as their temporal and spiritual head. They withstood the dervishes more fiercely, probably, than any other tribe of the Southern Sudan.

The Nuer have to the east of them at Nasir a trading post where a colony of northern Muslims, called Arabs, perform their prayers and tell their sibhas (rosary). This, however, has little influence upon the Nuer.

Some members of the Nilotic tribes go north into a Muslim area for work or as army recruits, become circumcised and Muslims, and upon their return go back to their former customs and practices, although these may not mean as much to them as before coming into contact with the Islamic environment.

For centuries the pagan tribal groups in the area between northern latitudes 12° and 10° have been under Islamic influence, while the Nilotic tribes to the south of latitude 10° have been either little influenced or not influenced at all. Even this area, however, is coming at present more and more under persistent Islamic influence and may be finally assimilated.

There is a close connection between Islam and trade. Commercial enterprise has opened up new routes of penetration. The Muslim finds it to his interest to proselytize at the suqs in the villages, and other points of contact. In the development of new centers Islam has spread its influence and has embraced surrounding areas (Trimingham 1949: 243-250).

With reference to Islamic penetration in the Nuba area, and the direct and indirect methods of proselytization, the following observation has been made: "Muhammad Tutu, the chief active

mek¹ of the Moro,² is Muslim and holds a feast after Ramadan which attracts his people. There are four authorized jallabas (petty traders) amongst the Moro and three amongst the Krongo.³

There are two definite suqs and four days a week the jallabas are allowed to go to other specified places. The indirect method of propaganda is employed when they spread out their prayer-mats before perhaps some 400 people. Only one jallaba does direct proselytizing. The Baqqara come to these suqs and some members will stay, living on the tribe. They do not proselytize, but will sell amulets. Fekis roam the hills. They are prohibited, but are difficult to find and remove, since the chiefs often invite them and will conceal their presence..

An example of the direct method is that of a former Ma'mur of Delami who went on a pilgrimage and returned keen to propagate his religion and build a mosque. He used to collect the Nuba for dhikrs and feasts and converted some chiefs (Delami and Kuderl) who now make their people keep Ramadan and have the boys circumcised" (Trimingham 1949: 250).

It is plain that in the indirect method of proselytization the Islamic religious factor is practically imperceptible, with emphasis upon ritual gestures rather than on beliefs. This, however, is just the starting point. It is a prelude to

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1. Mek (or makk), a leader with temporal authority.
 2. Moro, Nuba tribal groups of the southwest Nuba mountains.
 3. Krongo, Nuba tribal groups of the Krongo Jebels area in southern Kordofan.

the religious factor which eventually exerts itself. The genius of Islam in attracting the animist mind is that it is evolutionary and not revolutionary. The belief in Allah is a matter of assimilation rather than teaching. The African conceives of Allah as one who can give greater power than the indigenous spirits with which he is familiar. Assimilation in general is slow but definite. Islam makes no violent, revolutionary or shocking change. It so accommodates itself to the animist mind as to become almost one with it. It works upon the principle of giving medicine in such small palatable doses that the patient scarcely recognizes it. However, in the event a patient should take enough small doses he may gradually be restored to health. In like manner the process of acculturation, to begin with, may be slow, and imperceptible, but it goes on nevertheless until it comes to fruition.

There are detribalized groups on the northern border of the Dinka among which Islam has made inroads on their religious life. One factor in this process is probably the lack of cohesiveness among the detribalized elements. Being unattached to tribal life the groups are more susceptible to the influence of Islam than if they were under control of their individual tribes. Another factor is that Malikiyya villages are situated among these tribal groups which give close and constant contact, and these villages accommodate their teaching to the level of the religious traditional pattern of the native.

Islam was degenerate and was full of superstition and hagiology when it was first taught by the fekis of the Funj kingdom. The Funj kingdom held nominal sway in the Sudan from 1504 to 1821 and at the height of its power from 1642 to 1677 occupied an area extending from the Red Sea to Kordofan and from the Third Cataract, north of Donqola to Fāzōghlī on the Blue Nile, east of the Tabi Hills. These men were trained unimaginatively in the Malikiyya Madhhab, or rites, which meant that orthodox Islam had no influence on life and they were therefore deeply influenced by the weakened Sufism of the dervish orders. With no cultural background these men took the opportunity to accommodate their teaching to the anthropolatry and superstitions of the masses and to incorporate it into their lives.

Because of the inaccessibility and unstable political conditions the land was not in contact with other Islamic centers except the Hijaz, and the centers in the Hijaz were not in a very healthy state themselves. This isolation was inimical to the development of schools of learning or any native culture which might have set limits to extravagances. This meant that the Islam which developed in the Sudan was imbued with African tendencies and its characteristic features were emotionalism and superstition. As a result the Sudanese have far more faith in saints and superstitious practices than in the Islamic creed which they profess. Fullness of life for the Sudanese is sought and found through devotion to a holy person who possesses baraka (a supernatural

power). It does not matter whether a person is living or dead, the god of orthodox Islam is so exalted that he becomes accessible only through the saints who act as his intermediaries. Islam has re-oriented popular beliefs, built them into its own patterns of life which have assured their continuance and stability (Trimingham 1949: 108-109).

Saint worship occupies a considerable place in Muslim life. The saint has for an essential attribute the baraka. Through baraka, the saint brings to his worshippers prosperity, happiness and all good things of the world. He can also give his gifts to whole tribes, districts, and even beyond the confines of the world, through his powers of intercession with Allah. The saint does not even have to exercise his will for the baraka to be effective. His presence and touch are sufficient. The beneficent power flows out from the saint; from his body during his life, and remains after his death. His dead body miraculously pours it out into the grave and embues, not only the grave clothes but the soil itself. The protecting influence of a saint may operate in a region or among a group of tribes or in a larger geographical area. The Tradition attributes to the Prophet a special emanation, a baraka. In course of time, the idea became widespread. Muhammad, to begin with, was a perfect man worthy to serve all Muslims as an example. Then he became their protector in this life, appearing to them in dreams and visions and directing them by his advice; in after-life he will intercede for them with God.

The visit to his tomb at Madina has become a rite which is almost as obligatory as the pilgrimage to Mecca (Gaudefroy-Demombynes 1954: 56-58).

It can be clearly seen that saint worship found a fertile field in the Sudan for ancestor worship lies at the very core of Sudanese religion. The saint holds a higher place, in the conception of the Sudanese, than the Prophet himself. There is not necessarily any correlation between the saving power of a saint and his personal purity. He is a saint in the eyes of the Sudanese if he has baraka whether he is good, bad, or indifferent. The one essential thing for him to have is baraka. For with baraka he can perform miracles and attract the native reminding him of the pre-Islamic belief already in a wonder-working force now re-orientated in a new form in Islam.

It has been well said: "Eastern religion, beginning with the most ancient Egyptians and Mesopotamians, and down to the most recent trends in Islamic sectarianism, has always had two main concerns: physical well-being in this world and spiritual welfare after the death of the body. The ways and means of securing this double aim remained practically unchanged through centuries and millennia. The often changing names of the great gods or goddesses, easily adopted and frequently syncretized, came to designate always the same type of deity whose main dual function remained throughout the ages that of dispensing material blessings to his people in this life, while compensating the miserable but

righteous with a blend of material and spiritual pleasures in the afterlife. Eastern ritual, especially of the popular kind, also remained practically unchanged throughout the ages, although the deity in whose honor, or to propitiate whom, it was being performed came to be called by many different names. The preoccupation with the soul and salvation, a characteristic of Eastern religion in its varied manifestations, is the complementary side of the picture, the basic features remaining always the same in spite of the often revolutionary changes which swept the surface of the religious palimpsest" (Patai 1953: 40).

Islam is penetrating into the religious beliefs of the native religions of the Southern Sudan, pronounced in some sections among the Nuba, though less with the Dinka and Shilluk, and almost negligible among the Nuer. For the Sudani constantly seeks to find forces or powers which are higher than the powers of his own traditional functionaries or magical experts, and endeavors to tap those forces and to appropriate them for the protection and prosperity of himself and his family in this life and in life after death. Because African Islam has characteristics somewhat similar to the native traditional religions of the Sudanese, it becomes more easily acceptable to the native and therefore more easily assimilable. Islam also gives to the native a higher status for it represents for him a higher stage of social organization than paganism.

B. INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON NATIVE RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

"The very first result of Arab-Muhammadan influence is the assumption of at least a minimum of clothing" (Seligman 1932: 366). Upon this basis, among the tribes which formerly went entirely naked, as was known to be the pattern among the tribes of the Southern Sudan, there is direct evidence of Islamic influence; for we have no evidence of the wearing of any apparel, however scanty, before they came in contact with Islam. In this one respect at least we have Islamic influence among all the tribes discussed in this study. This culture trait, then, borrowed from the Arab-Muhammadan culture, ^{Muslim} has become a part of the Sudanese culture complex.

Three stages in the assimilation of Islamic culture may be observed in pagan societies: (a) The adoption of certain elements of the material culture of Muslims, for instance, Muslim forms of clothing, ornaments, food habits (such as tea and coffee), the chewing of qat¹ (catha edulis, a kind of shrub grown in Yemen and used as a stimulant). (b) The assimilation of actual religious elements of Islamic culture. This is not difficult, for the pagan is already saturated with belief in impersonal powers, residing either in persons or in things, with special emphasis on ancestor worship which is focal in African religion. Thus the native is quite willing to buy charms, and protective amulets, or to recite any formula which he regards as being of assistance to him in propitiating the powers for his well-being. Such elements of the

1. A culture trait indigenous to Yemen.

Islamic religious culture mean nothing in itself until the pagan loses faith in his own customary religious safeguards. (c) The third stage is characterized by a genuine belief in the efficacy of Islamic rites, and involves actual change in habit, custom and conduct. Examples are the marking out of a prayer place, the performance of prayer, the fasting on Ramadan, orientation of the grave toward Mecca, and taboo on animal food containing blood. Along with this goes the discarding or disuse of the native practices of levirate, exogamy, and initiation ceremonies, and the adoption of Islamic social practices in their stead. This marks the actual transition from a pagan to an Islamized society (Trimingham 1952: 271-273).

This does not mean, however, that there is an entire break with the native traditional religion. It may be, but not necessarily so, for even at the most advanced stage of assimilation the devotee of Islam may still carry with him vestigial elements of his native religion, so saturated or imbued with Islamic features that they may be regarded as entirely new.

Nadel, in speaking of the social structure of the Arabs, their kinship system, marriage and inheritance, says that these had no impress on the Nuba culture. He maintains that certain Nuba practices which are similar to Arab practices are due, not to Arab influences, as such, but to general change in conditions of Nuba life. He also says that the change from matrilineal to

patrilineal inheritance of property and the easing of divorce rules were the result of the changed nature of property and of the impact of cosmopolitan urban life. He adds, however, that Arab society offers an ever present model for it all and, therefore, one is inclined to assume that Arab society must have exercised a definite influence on these changes (Nadel 1947: 486).

Among the Nuba, tribes, traditionally without clothing, begin to wear clothes as a result of the acculturative process. This alone may imply the concept of sexual shame and may mean more than artificial imitation. The men among the Nuba tribes adopt clothing first, at least a shirt for covering, while the women for a long time afterwards keep up their native dress habits. The men sometimes demand that their women assume a less-revealing dress. In Dilling and Kadura, where men and women have full clothing, the women revert to their traditional garb in the rites of marriage, childbirth, or the great tribal ceremonies.

The Dinka adorn themselves, in deference to Arab custom, with whatever they can procure on the way to Arab markets, and some have acquired a desire for clothes. A smattering of Islam is acquired, occasional genuflection, the reading of the Fatha (Fātiha), special Quranic passages, at a marriage feast, which they regard as a form of magical blessing, quite apart from the text. However, the main tenets of Islam are unknown except to

those Dinka who have been completely absorbed into Baqqara society (Sudan Notes and Records 1951: 248).

Arab influence has not spread in the same degree in the Nuba mountains. The southern and western hills, Korongo, Mesakin, Moro, Tullishi, are least affected. These are hills occupied by Nuba tribes who are identified by the names of the hills. Men and women still go naked in these hills or are clad in their customary scanty dress. Rifles, broad-bladed Arab spears are common and Arab charm-sellers find a flourishing market for their wares in this area. In the north, in Koalib, Dilling, Kaduru, and Nyima, assimilation is making progress. The eastern hills Heiban, Laro, Otorro, and Tira stand between these extremes. The northern groups have in the past lived in friendship with the Arab tribes. In recent times the northern hills have been the most fertile centers for the recruiting of soldiers and police while few have come from the southern hills. While contacts with Arabs have been similar in all areas the response to the same stimulus has been dissimilar (Nadel 1947: 483-488).

With reference to circumcision, the Dinka learned the custom from the Arabs and their women approved the custom (Seligman 1932: 172).

Circumcision among the Azande is a recent introduction but it is tending to become general in the Congo and is spreading in the Sudan.

Zandeland has adopted the custom of circumcision under the influence of Arab traders and the rite may be performed as early as a week or two after birth in some cases (Baxter and Butt 1953: 73-74).

Juvenile circumcision, male and female, is an Arab institution which has significant social adjustments. It is not a mere graft upon the traditional culture. Male circumcision is not an entirely new custom among the Nuba. There are tribes in which the practice was known, though it had been formerly limited to specific social groups or grades in the society in Tira and Tullishi. Islam gave new meaning to the rite and it has thus extended the custom beyond the old limit.

Female circumcision is found in two forms, clitoridectomy and the pharaonic operation. Clitoridectomy is indigenous in some Nuba groups. It is practiced by Arab tribes in the west and southwest of Kordofan, and has spread to the neighboring Nuba, the Kamdang, the Miri and the Daju. The Hawazma Arabs in the eastern Nuba mountains practice the pharaonic circumcision or infibulation and this practice reached the Tira in that section. The pharaonic circumcision involves the cutting away of the labia majora, making the vulva grow together, to be opened again in the act of defloration.

Another aspect, involving both kinds of circumcision, is the preparedness of the Nuba culture for the new usage. Female

circumcision never appears by itself in the Nuba Mountains. It accompanies or is subsequent to male circumcision. It expresses the balance of the sexes, female life paralleling and balancing that of male life--circumcision being a rite de passage for women as well as for men.

The Nyamang of the northwest Nuba mountains are less influenced by Islam than some other Nuba groups, but the entry into manhood is marked by circumcision and seclusion in the hills for over a month. This occurs between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-six. The circumcision of a young man in any particular year depends upon the ability of his family to provide enough grain to make beer for the festivities in connection with circumcision.

Before the rite takes place the youths parade in white shorts, a red loin-sash, sheep's hair round the ankles and girls' armlets, indicating that they are like women and do not yet have the status of men. With short sticks waving, they go about the village three weeks preceded by boy attendants carrying a sword with bell attached. After this, a sacrifice is offered in the event any trouble is in the household. On a nearby hill each youth is joined by fellow-initiates. The rite of circumcision is performed by a crude method of bringing down a sharpened hoe-head or ax on the outstretched foreskin. The initiate is not supposed to make a sound or show any indication of pain. There

are circumcisions performed in several localities in each village by a group of a half-dozen or more men. An initiate is called a kwai kanyer, new man, for a new man by this rite of circumcision has been added to the tribe (Sudan Notes and Records 1940: 88).

Circumcision is practiced at Dilling, Nuba territory, in accordance with Arabic or Islamic custom. The rite is performed by the kujur at the approach of puberty, on a stone with an ebony ax. Boys are conducted to the place of ceremony amid singing and the beating of drums in order to arouse them to a state of ecstasy and to render them insensible to pain.

Circumcision with the Afitti of Jebel Dair, southeast Kordofan, has been adopted from the Arabs. The operation on women consists of the removal of the clitoris and takes place before the first delivery in order that the blood from the womb might mingle with the blood of childbirth (Sudan Notes and Records 1923: 21).

The process of Arabization and Islamization is manifest among the Nuba tribes of Taqali, comprising some of the eastern hills of the Nuba. The people have embraced Islam for generations, wear clothes, speak Arabic, have given up keeping pigs, and some even pretend to Arab pedigrees and talk with disdain of the naked Nuba (Sudan Notes and Records 1925: 125).

Circumcision is a facet in Islamic culture in helping to preserve social unity. All of the events of social and family

life are directed toward this end. This involves circumcision, marriage, death, dress, manner of speech along with all other units of culture in the Islamic structure. These elements help to unify and solidify the Islamic community.

The Dinka, who live on the White Nile as far as Renk to the north and as far as Bor to the south, with a large group in the basin of Bahr el-Arab, come in contact with the Baqqara-Rizaiqāt.

The Rizaiqāt are found in Darfur, a very rich and powerful tribe. They live in the extreme southeast with the Dinka to the south. Owing to the natural advantage of their country, which in dry weather is bounded on the north by a broad and waterless belt, and during the rains is marshy, and to their naturally war-like disposition and an abundance of horses, they were able to resist all aggression by the Sultan Ali Dinar. (Ali Dinar was Sultan of Darfur during the Mahdiyya period and almost the first quarter of the twentieth century). One hundred and fifty years ago they roamed over a large part of central Kordofan during the rainy season and in the dry season they went south with their cattle to the Bahr el-Arab (River of the Arab), where raids and counter-raids between them and the Dinka have been of yearly occurrence (Machichael 1922: 290).

Arab influence is seen among the Dinka who occupy an area along the Bahr el-Arab with Baqqara Arabs to the north of them with whom they have direct and seasonal contact. They are on the

most northerly boundary of the western Dinka block, between the Nilotics of the south and the Muslim peoples of the north. The Dinka of this area have been in contact with the Baqqara for at least a century and a half. There has been more or less constant contact during that period. In spite of the dervishes and Arab-slavers who raided the Dinka at one time, relations between them have not always been hostile. During the dry season and in time of famine, the Dinka migrate in large numbers to Muglad, a small market town situated in the northern Miri Hills, which is the administrative center of the Hamar tribe of the Baqqara, in order to find work. Often they are employed by merchants and the sedentary population of the town of Muglad on numerous jobs; carrying, cultivating or cutting grass and so forth. In some cases an individual and even a whole family of Dinka will attach themselves to a Baqqara ferig (cattle camp) and assist in cultivation and in herding the cattle in return for food. This relationship may last for several years. This may be for the purpose of purchasing a few cattle or for the bare necessities of life.

Intermarriage is infrequent. Formerly the Baqqara took Dinka slaves as concubines and produced offspring. No social barrier existed between Baqqara of older Arab stock and the sons of slave women, for the sons, in accordance with Arab custom, took the status of the father. However this form of union was without influence on the main group of the Dinka for no social

relationship was established between the Baqqara and the women's relatives. Even at the present time Baqqara will sometimes marry Dinka girls from attached families who live with them, but they do not pay enough cattle for them to be called bridewealth, and a social relationship is established between the Baqqara and the immediate family only of the girl, and not with her remote relatives living in Dinka country. Such marriages are not unions in the true sense to the Dinka because no bridewealth is paid and the social and ritual ceremonies are not performed.

Except for dependence upon Arab resources in time of famine, economic exchange is limited. Small sales of hides, skins, and some cattle are made to the Arabs. But there seems to be no great desire, on the part of the Dinka, to earn money except when their crops have failed or when they need money with which to buy cattle.

There is a common system, however, which persists at all times in which the Arabs barter cow-calves for full-grown oxen which they sell in the main markets at El-Obeid in central Kordofan, and at Nahud, south of El-Obeid. (Sudan Notes and Records 1951: 246-247).

The cultural map of the Nuba Mountains is being changed by the spreading influence of Arab civilization. This Arab and Islamic influence in the Sudan is not uniform. Two cultural levels can be found, one of the semi-nomadic herdsmen and another of the Arab cities.

The Nuba came in contact with nomadic herdsmen as neighbors or in war, and also with the Arab culture of the cities, as servants, slaves, soldiers, and visitors, as individuals temporarily surrounded by a culture different from their own. The main features of urban Islam are ritual prayer, fasting, and observance of the tenets of the Quranic Law. Except for keeping Ramadan, having respect for holy men, and regard for the jihad, the essential features of Islam are lacking among the nomads. The Nuba societies have been influenced, for the most part, by the infrequent casual agency of individuals, which is one of the factors in the Nuba adoption of isolated and disconnected traits from both the urban and the nomadic variants of Islamic culture. It might well be assumed that the Nuba could see the superiority of these Arab traits, if no more than in the field of warfare, for such implements as were used by them were vital to the physical survival of the tribe.

Religious assimilation is facilitated by the eagerness to adopt any new technique of supernatural control. Islam spread in the Nuba Mountains in disconnected elements, of purely magic significance. The Arab feki finds buyers among the Nuba for his charms and magic roots. Even the Quran is widely used and treated as a magic implement and as an instrument of ordeal, working with the mechanical precision, characteristic of the traditional magic instruments, the spear of the grain priest and the ax of the rain-makers.

The acceptance of Islam as a higher form of religion is a factor in the acculturative process. Individuals who have experienced the superiority of Islamic society in its most conspicuous, as well as literal, form are mostly soldiers and policemen, Government-sponsored Chiefs, ex-servants and ex-slaves. This does not necessarily mean that all the tenets of Islam are fully accepted and carried out, for Islam has not changed conduct to any considerable degree.

Neither prayers nor fasts have yet entered into Nuba life. Only the Islamic food avoidance of the pig has spread widely. Almost the whole Miri tribe of the Nuba observes the prohibition of eating pig, with the exception of its priests. The spiritual leaders in one way or another are under special rules which separate them from the rest of the group.

As to the influence of social structure of the Arab on Nuba culture, their kinship system, their system of marriage or inheritance, there seems to have been little. The change from matrilineal to patrilineal inheritance of property was not made independently of Islam, for whatever other factors might have been involved, Islam had its influence. This is none the less true with other changes among the Nuba, following the pattern of Islam.

There is almost complete absence of decorative art and the human figure is not carved, with the exception of southwestern

Bahr el-Ghazal (Seligman 1932: 22). This is the general pattern of the Nilotic Sudan. This would seem to be an Islamic influence for it is known that Islam forbade the reproduction of likenesses and semblances of living creatures. While this has not always been adhered to, yet this aspect of Islam has continued to assert itself even to this day.

It is a custom among Muslims in burying their dead to place the body on the right side with the head pointing toward Mecca. This custom has found its way among the Nilotes and other tribes of the Sudan. The corpse is washed, decked with ornaments, wrapped in a cloth and placed on the right side with head toward the east.

The Tira tribe in the northeastern section of the southern Nuba mountains, influenced by Islam, bury their dead in shallow oblong graves of Arab pattern, however, they place the body according to the ritual directions of the various clans and not as the Arabs do with the face turned eastward. It can be seen that while the new custom of burying has been adopted, in the matter at least of direction, the particular clan ritual of the old custom has been preserved.

Islam has exerted definite influence on the religious practices of the native traditional religion of the Sudan. In some cases it has entirely absorbed the native religion. In other cases vestigial elements of the native religion remain; still in other cases it has re-set and re-orientated the vestigial elements in

the native religion and directed them into Islamic channels. Progress has been slow in some areas, especially among the Shilluk. They hold tenaciously to their native religion. However some of them who have lived in close contact with Islam, as soldiers, do adopt Islam and wear Muhammadan amulets along with their own charms. While this may be the result of their proudness and conservatism and partly due to slave-raiding and cruelty during the Turkiyya period from 1820 to 1885, bringing about hostile relations between the Shilluk and Islam, contact is carried on, nevertheless, between these two cultures, and with the absence of slave-raiding new ideas are slowly penetrating among them and there is evidence that progress is being made. It is not too much to state that with this continued contact between two cultures, that there will be a gradual assimilation of the two cultures and Islam will make a peaceful conquest of the native elements.

C. INFLUENCE OF ISLAM ON NATIVE RELIGIOUS
FUNCTIONARIES AND ORGANIZED CEREMONIALS

There is some evidence that the development of Nuer prophets was related to the spread of Mahdism from the Northern Sudan. However that may be, there is no doubt that powerful prophets arose about the time when Arab intrusion into Nuer land was at its height and that after re-conquest of the Sudan they were more respected and had more influence than any other persons in Nuerland (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 187).

Muhammad Ahmad, the son of a boat builder, was known as Al-Mahdi, the guided one. Born at Dongola, trained at Berber, he settled at Aba Isle on the White Nile. He established a khalwa, and gathered about him a number of disciples. Dissatisfied with the worldliness of his teacher, Muhammad Sharif, he left him and devoted himself to a period of ascetism and piety. Animated by dreams, visions, hallucinations, and spiritual ecstasy, he felt it was his to establish a new order, in the sense of reforming the faith and preparing for the millenium. Tribal internecine wars on the one hand and exploitation and victimization on the other by overlords were factors with which the mahdi had to deal. He dealt with them courageously, if not always discreetly.

With fanatical zeal he entered upon his sacred mission to rid the Sudan of Turkish oppression and to bring freedom to the natives who had suffered by such oppression and cruelty. Following the pattern of the Prophet he appointed four khalifas, Abdullahi Al Taaishi to represent Abu Bekr, Ali Al Heli to represent Omar, Muhammad Sharif to represent Ali, and the fourth chair was offered to Sanusi, an Islamic reform movement initiated by Muhammad Ali Al-Sanusi, an Algerian. The Sanusi did not accept the offer and opposed the mahdist. There is a tradition that the chair was left vacant and one day the Sanusi will take it and lead Islam to victory.

Almost unnoticed to begin with, the Mahdi steadily gained adherents to his cause and in a few years he held sway over the

Sudan. Subsequent to his death in 1885 Khalifa Abdullahi took over his power, but the strict religious principles enunciated and fostered by the Mahdi were changed into extortion and oppression. There was a law that all spoil of war had to be brought to the bait-al-mal, the Treasury. The Treasury financed the Jihad, the holy war. Subsequent to conquest the bait-al-mal was filled by means of taxation and confiscation. This characterizes, briefly, the Mahdiyya period.

The Mahdist sect can be found near the White and Blue Nile and Funj provinces. It has adherents among the Baqqara from the Nuba mountains through Kordofan into Darfur. The Nuba, Islamized on many hills or semi-Islamized already by contact with Islam, and the Dinka who come in close contact with the Baqqara are less influenced for there is closer cohesiveness among the Dinka than among the Nuba with many detribalized elements among them. It is almost axiomatic to say that detribalization facilitates Islamization. It seems to be definite that Mahdism from the Northern Sudan has caused its influence to be felt among the Nuer in the Southern Sudan and if this is credible with the Nuer it may be assumed to be no less true with the Shilluk and the Dinka who are much nearer the sphere of influence from the Northern Sudan than the Nuer.

In correlating the development of Nuer prophets with the spread of Mahdism, it has been said; "Whilst it is difficult to

believe that there were no cases of possession sixty years ago we must, in the absence of conflicting evidence, accept so unanimous a declaration by Nuer that there was no possession by sky-gods, and it seems fairly certain that if there were any prophets at that time their influence was restricted to small localities and had not the tribal significance of more recent times" (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 187). This would seem to show that there was a lack of prophets, or that prophets were so limited as to be almost without importance among the Nuer, until the pattern was set before them by Islamic prophets who were possessed or motivated by the Mahdist spirit, and that prophets only became tribally significant among the Nuer after the influence of Islam. If this statement is valid, this means, even if a few prophets were scattered here and there in Nuerland that no appreciable influence was exerted by them upon the Nuer until the Mahdi appeared, and it was that influence spreading from the Northern Sudan which brought the prophet into focus in Nuerland in such a way as to receive tribal recognition. This does not mean that the Nuer prophet, because of this, has in any way accepted Islam as a religion, but it does mean that this great wave of fanaticism and emotionalism which sprang up in the Northern Sudan during the last quarter of the nineteenth century seeped into the Southern Sudan and left its influence upon the Nuer, at least sufficiently to bring the prophet into tribal prominence.

In trying to set forth the influence of Mahdism on the Sudan, it might be said that it is generally the case where people have been exploited, abused and frustrated, that they have looked for a deliverer, a better day. The stage was set in the Sudan for such an one. There was a need for deliverance from oppression in the Sudan and the Mahdi arose in response to that need.

Messianic elements have played a great role in Muslim thought. The concept was derived through converts to Islam and soon was established in popular belief. The people were not pleased with the worldliness of their rulers and while some turned to asceticism as an escape-mechanism from what they regarded as the evils of their rulers, the majority of the people held to the idea of a future deliverer who would restore Islam to its pristine purity. Eschatological tradition with reference to the Prophet indicated that a time of confusion and oppression would be the prelude to the Last Day brought to an end by the coming of the Mahdi, the God-guided one.

Muhammad Ahmad had been made over through a deep spiritual experience, and the Mahdiyya was an attempt to re-create in his own environment the change which he himself had experienced. The people joined and died for the movement because they were frustrated and in despair. Even though they had passed through a long period of tyranny, exploitation, and victimization this did not unite them. Religion provided the stimulus to change

this, and the Mahdi was the man for the times. The secret of his success is to be found in his strong personality and his power to influence the susceptible Sudanese who were prepared by their oppression for his leadership. In addition to this, there was the overmastering belief in his divine call, the absolute conviction that he was the Mahdi of Allah. This gave him authority against which there was no appeal.

The Mahdiyya was a movement revolutionary in character with only one possible allegiance. This was the religious tie of faith which could break over tribal bounds and feuds in order that concerted action could be taken. Cultivators, detribalized elements, certain Arab tribes including the Baqqara, and others fell under the spell of this fanatical religious movement which swept through the Sudan. There was equality between rich and poor for the Mahdiyya wiped out tribal loyalties, and Baqqara and black slaves fought alike under one banner and the slave could rise to the highest position in the state.

The Mahdi regarded himself as the sole representative of God and felt called upon to initiate innovations in the practice of Islam. He changed the Pillars of Faith (Arkan). (1) He added to the Shahada (confession of faith: "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and that Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah"), the words: "and that Muhammad Ahmad ibn 'abd Allah is the Mahdi of Allah and the representative of His Prophet". (2)

He substituted the Jihad, the holy war, which was essential for the establishment of God's rule, in the place of the Hajj, the pilgrimage, which, being unnecessary, was forbidden. Sunni practice has never admitted the jihad as a pillar (rukn) of faith. (3)

The Salat, the ritual prayer in congregation, was given great importance as the symbol of unity. (4) Obedience to God's commandments as taught by the Mahdi, was substituted in place of Sawn (fasting), which he claimed to be based on the Sunna, Tradition of the Prophet communicated by direct revelation. (5) Recitation of the Quran and the Ratib of the Mahdi were substituted for Zakat (alms). The Ratib is a compilation of prayers, texts, and passages from the Quran and hadith, the religious traditions in which no mention of himself and his pretensions occurs. This had to be recited twice daily after the subh, a prayer which takes place at dawn and sunrise, and asr, a prayer to be said between three and five o'clock in the afternoon which required about forty-five minutes.

The Mahdi was intent upon reforming the morals and revolutionizing the customs of the Sudanese. He advocated renunciation of all earthly vanities, forbade intoxicants, tobacco, amulets, magic, marriage and circumcision feasts, and visiting tombs of the saints. This of course, struck at the core of Sudanese tribal life for these are the main elements of Sudanese religious life, and saint worship is the focal element of Sudanese religion. These

elements making up Sudanese religion went underground during the Mahdiyya regime but came back with full force after the Mahdiyya. Great emphasis was placed upon the Jihad , for this gave great assurance to his followers. It is said that the Prophet said to the Mahdi, in a vision: "These warriors who have gone forth for the religion of God shall be welcomed by God in the world to come. They shall be allowed into the paradise wherein are lofty palaces, chaste wives, and the greatest happiness and prosperity" (Trimingham 1949: 150-157).

Wahhabism was also a movement which had its influence upon the Sudan. Muhammad b. Abdul-Wahhab, from whom the name of the movement is derived, was born in 1720 A. D. in Najd, in the high-lands of Arabia. He was imbued with the idea of re-establishing the sincere religion of Islam unalloyed with any type of corruption which he felt had assimilated with Islam. The Wahhabite movement in its fanaticism, interrupted the pilgrim-caravans, destroyed the domes and tombs of the saints, broke the Black Stone in the Kaba, declared the equality of all men before God, forbade smoking, and the wearing of ornamental regalia and praying over the rosary.

Nicholson states: "The Wahhabite movement has been compared with the Protestant Reformation in Europe; but while the latter was followed by the English and French Revolutions, the former has not yet produced any great political results. It has borne fruit in a general religious revival throughout the world of Islam and particularly

in the mysterious Sanusiyya Brotherhood, whose influence is supreme in Tripoli, the Sahara, and the whole North African Hinterland and whose members are reckoned by millions" (Nicholson 1953: 467-468).

Wahhabism penetrated the Sudan especially as a result of the missionary work initiated by Ahmad Ibn Idris who sent emissaries from Mecca to Sudan in the nineteenth century. These missionaries set up their orders in the Sudan and their efforts influenced not only the Northern Sudan but, to some extent, also the southern pagan areas.

The puritan character of Wahhabism is evident in its basic doctrines. Among these are the following:

- (1) All objects of worship other than Allah are false, and all who worship such are deserving of death.
- (2) The bulk of mankind are not monotheists, since they endeavor to win God's favor by visiting the tombs of saints.
- (3) It is polytheism (shirk) to introduce the name of a prophet, saint or angel into a prayer.
- (4) It is shirk to seek intercession from any but Allah.
- (5) It is shirk to make vows to any other being.
- (6) It involves unbelief (kufr) to profess knowledge not based on the Quran, the Sunna, or the necessary inferences of the reason.
- (7) It involves unbelief and heresy (ilhad) to deny kadar (predestination) in all acts.
- (8) It involves unbelief to interpret the Quran by tawil (witchcraft) (Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam 1953: 618).

Mahdism and Wahhabism, fanned by fanaticism, rose up as a revolt against the old order of foreigners to establish an ideal order. Mahdism started in the Northern Sudan at Dongola and Wahhabism started outside of the Sudan, in the Hijaz. But both movements influenced no little the Northern Sudan with less influence on the Southern Sudan. This influence, however, was enough upon the Southern Sudan despite the fact that the Southern Sudan is less accessible than the Northern Sudan.

For hundreds of years Arabs from the Yaman, Hijaz, and Hadramawt had been penetrating the vast areas of the Sudan. Some united with Nubian and Beja tribes between the main Nile and the Red Sea, and as a result mongrel Arabic-speaking Hamitic groups such as the Ja'aliyyin of Shendi were produced. Others in the Jazira, Kordofan and Dafur mixed with black tribes to form either sedentary agricultural groups with weak tribal affinities or fully tribal nomadic cattle-breeding Baqqara. All these tribes had come under Turko-Egyptian hegemony, and propagandists were producing religious fermentation among them. Detribalization of pagan tribes through slave-raiding, recruitment into Egyptian regiments, and artificial Islamization brought new religious forces into an already confused milieu. There began to emerge among these mutually hostile groups two new words, jihad and Mahdi, which had been relatively unheard of in the Islam of the Funj kingdom. A slow fire was kindled which was to burst into a holocaust of Mahdist revolt and drive the foreign oppressors from their land (Trimingham 1952: 116-117).

These movements, animated by religious fanaticism, left their influence upon the Sudan. Along with other factors, they gave impetus to the acculturative process and the orientation process with reference to functionaries and organized ceremonies. The religious fermentation of these two movements expanded over the Sudan and their influence is felt even to this day.

On Jebel Kukur, west of the Tabi Hills there is a stone called Soba and also Mit i Tel (stone of the sun). This stone, rounded and about ten inches in length, is stained a rich black color by means of frequent application of fat, and is thought to be the son of a larger stone, not too far away under the shade of a tree which appeared from the ground with the first man and woman, Gebir and Otianer by name, of whom the people are derivatives. This stone is called Soba or Doti and some smaller stones nearby are called Mitige Nyulge. Bones of animals which have been sacrificed can be seen on the big stone, while on the heap of stone-children can be seen the blood of sacrificial offerings.

The people gather at the feasts of Poing, Ramadan and Bairam, rub fat on the stone Mit i Tel, which is on a mat on the inside. One of the sen i kung, the hereditary war leader or head of the community, places bread, beer and fat before it. They pray at the shrine of the big stone and kill a sheep when in need of rain. They do this also before the little stone and allow blood to drip upon it. Sick men sometimes sit all day before the big stone in the shade of the tree.

Wherever one may die he is buried there. In the event a man is very ill he will try as soon as possible to reach his own village. A woman will leave her own home and go to the house of her father or brother. Should a man die away from his home, his relatives will go to his grave and have a ceremony for the purpose of returning his spirit to his own home.

The corpse is washed, decked with ornaments and wrapped in such a way that no part of the body is visible. The right side of the body is placed on a mat with the head toward the East. At Kukur, west of the Tabi Hills, the Muslim recessed grave is used. A broken spear, including a little tobacco, is placed in the grave. A ceremony is held at the burial place and stones are placed around the grave and a couch placed upon the grave. Sometimes digging sticks are used instead (Seligman 1932: 437).

Here we have the incorporation of the feasts of Ramadan and Bairam into the Kukur ceremonial system, a syncretism of Nilotic and Islamic religious features, a decided influence of Islam upon the culture of this group. Whatever the influence of Islam is in this connection, it has not been enough to entirely blot out the tenacious hold of the pagan elements. This is a main factor in the success of Islam in Africa.

It is probably not too much for one to say that from the time the pre-Islamic Black Stone, with its spiritual influence was incorporated into the Islamic system, Islam has not been free of

animistic elements. This factor alone helps to facilitate its inroads on pagan indigenous religions whose tenets are not too far removed from many aspects of Islam itself. MacMichael succinctly sums this up in speaking of the coming of Islam among pagans when he says, "It was to wrench the ancient custom from its original setting and reset it in a modified form among the unobjectionable, if not quite orthodox, observances of the local True Believers; and the latter would never fail to represent their prayers as directed to the one God, however much their fears might really center upon the hidden demon known to their forefathers" (MacMichael 1922: 73-74).

CONCLUSION

In this brief account of the native traditional religion of the more important tribes of the Southern Sudan, the Nuba, the Shilluk, the Dinka and the Nuer, we observed similarities between their religious beliefs and their ceremonies, and comparableness between their religious functionaries and magical experts, even though their names differ in some respects. We observed no essential differences in the functions of their religious experts. We saw that wherever these tribes are located, whether in the mountains of Kordofan like the Nuba, on the east and west banks of the Nile from Kaka to Lake No like the Shilluk, or between Renk on the north and Bor on the south, or in the basin of Bahr-el-Arab like the Dinka, or like the Nuer along the Upper Sobat, the Pibor and the Zeraf

region, or the Azande in southwest Sudan, they believe in a high God and are deeply imbued with the concept of ancestor-worship, for ancestor-worship is the focal element in Sudanese religions. This leads us to assume that these southern Nilotic tribes have a similar culture complex and are a part of a single culture area.

We observed the spread of Islam in the Sudan, a different kind of culture from that of the Sudanese tribes, though in many respects similar. We found that the bearers of Islam were Africanized for the most part, which gave to the Africans an African brand of Islam which was not too far from their own religious pattern. While this brand of African Islam was more easily assimilable among Africans who were imbued with animistic ideas, we observed that the response to this stimulus was different and its influence was not the same on these different tribes although their cultures were similar. Several factors account for this. One is that it must not be taken for granted that because a number of tribes may share the same culture complex, their response will be the same to a new environment. Another factor which must be taken into account is where there is close cohesiveness of tribal life the mores of the tribe are not as easily penetrated as in the case of lax cohesiveness or of detribalized units who are unattached to their tribes and are without tribal sanctions. Still another factor is that of inaccessibility and infrequent contact of one culture with another. The Nuer and the Dinka are examples of this, for they are not as accessible to Islamic influence as the Nuba. The Shilluk, conservative and proud, have

probably more cohesiveness as a group than any other group among the Nilotes.

In a final word, a brief statement should be made of the similarity and contrast of the impact of Westernization on Middle East culture with that of the impact of Islamization on African pagan culture.

Patai in an article, "The Dynamics of Westernization in the Middle East," has shown that the United States and England are the most characteristic representatives of Western culture, with their urbanized majority, and that Iraq, Iran and the Arabian peninsula are the most characteristic representatives of Middle Eastern culture, with their seminomadic and agricultural majority. Because of the interplay, or interchange, between these two cultures, which was in process for centuries, no essential differences between them were observed. The Industrial Revolution with its technological advancement, however, brought about marked differences. It was easy for the West to see the technological advances which were so prominent in its culture to be almost, if not wholly, lacking in Middle Eastern culture. Since the two cultures had been for centuries possessed of similar aspects, the Middle Easterners could also observe that they were being outdistanced in many areas of progress. And this one factor, that of the similarity of cultures to which they were accustomed, conditioned them to be the more easily impressed, or influenced, by the new culture which was emerging before them by Westerners who were in their midst.

Without elaborating on the different ways in which Westernization has shown its influence on Middle Eastern culture, Patai points out the part Western institutions played in the innovations which took place in the Tanzimat period in the Ottoman Empire and by Muhammad 'Ali in Egypt. He shows clearly that the political concepts of nationalism and Western democracy, characterized by the right of self-determination, sovereignty of the people, social obligation of the state, were all Western concepts which found their way into Middle Eastern ideology. His primary emphasis, however, in the matter of Western influence on Middle East culture is on, to use his own words, "the aspects of technology and prestige, and an analysis of the widening range of changes resulting from these primary points of impact."

The West made its impact of technological culture and brought about a dislodgement of many of the facets of Middle Eastern culture, and the Middle Eastern culture found itself infused with and a user of the technological devices which were absent or without focal emphasis in its own culture.

In the matter of dress alone, to take just one example, the Easterner adopted the Western suit, for somehow he regarded this as setting him apart from many of his fellows and giving him standing and prestige, elements which seemed to be almost inherent in Western culture.

The Westerner moved among the best circles of Middle Eastern society, had the best positions, and held places of power

and importance. This attached to him significance and gave to him singular prestige, along with his technological tools of progress which were observed by the Middle Easterner as being superior to his own.

The Westerner also carried along with his technological tools a religion--the Christian religion. But his attitude toward religion was different from that of the Middle Easterner, whose whole life was characterized by religion, for religion is focal in Middle East life. The whole of life is subjugated by it. The Western viewpoint of religion is almost diametrically opposite to this. The Westerner placed little emphasis upon religion. He held the place of power and prestige. This attitude soon seeped into the Middle Easterner, and he was found to have less interest in his own religion, thereby imitating the Westerner. It has been well said: "These foreigners were not only adherents of a different faith, but their attitude toward their own Christian religion was, on the whole, lukewarm. Among those Middle Easterners whose general attitude toward Westernization was positive, the emulation of Western ways therefore meant, among other things, to display unconcern about their own religion. On the other hand, among those whose ties to their own religion-centered traditional culture proved stronger than the Westerly pull, Western irreligiosity became an additional cause to reject whatever the West had to offer and to seek refuge in 'return to Islam' movements" (Middle East Journal 1955: 3-5, 15).

Islam, somewhat similar to the pattern of Westernization on Middle East culture, made its impact upon African pagan culture as a higher form of culture. As has already been stated, it found the Sudani without clothes and because of its influence the Sudani soon found himself wrapped in Islamic garb. This Islamic influence dislodged many of the native tribal elements and the Sudani could see that Islam was something that was higher than that which he himself had. The prestige element in Islam alone caused many a Nuba chief to come with his whole tribe into the fold of Islam. This gave status and prestige, and made him a part of a higher circle and set him and his tribe apart from the native tribes or elements who held to the traditional pattern.

As Westernization carried a religion to Middle Eastern culture, so Middle Eastern culture carried a religion, Islam, to African culture. In this they are alike. But here the analogy ends. They are unlike in that while Westernization gave but little more than token allegiance to the tenets of Christianity and cared less about it, with relatively no emphasis upon it, Islam, on the other hand, embraced the whole of life and was and is focal in Middle Eastern culture. This is the religion which has so impressed itself upon Sudanese culture as to be making inroads among the tribes of the Southern Sudan.

Modern technological advance is helping in facilitating the progress of Islam by building roads and giving proper transportation.

Fekis, prophets, Mahdis, merchants, and traders will not fail to travel these highways as the bearers of Islam. Suqs and shops will more and more be established where contacts will be made with these Sudanese tribes. African Islam will continue to do its work. Religious orders will spread and the Southern Sudan will gradually, slowly and surely be taken into the fold of Islam.

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THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN

Miles 100 50 0 100 200 300 400 Miles

REFERENCE

International Boundaries

Railways

Province Boundaries

Telegraphs or Telephones

Motor Roads

Wireless stations ∇

Battlefields ✂

Landing ground for Aero

